SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE IN BYZANTIUM

Nicolas Oikonomides

edited by Elizabeth Zachariadou

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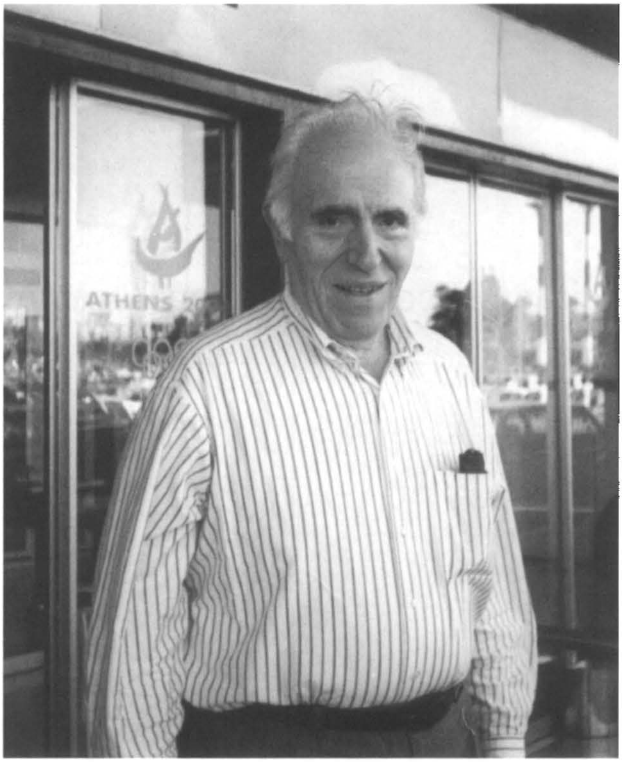

Professor Nicolas Oikonomides

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The articles in this volume, as in all others in the Variorum Collected Studies Series, have not been given a new, continuous pagination. In order to avoid confusion, and to facilitate their use where these same studies have been referred to elsewhere, the original pagination has been maintained wherever possible.

Each article has been given a Roman number in order of appearance, as listed in the Contents. This number is repeated on each page and is quoted in the index entries.

NICOLAS OIKONOMIDES

Born in Athens to a family with Constantinopolitan links on 14 February, 1934, Nicolas Oikonomides forged a scholarly career of international distinction, probity and humanity from the very diverse circumstances thrown out by a convulsive twentieth century. Although originally inclined to the modern history of a reborn Greece, his studies quickly coalesced around Byzantium, whose ancient capital was his father's birthplace and favorite reading subject. As an 18-year old, Oikonomides made an auspicious beginning with a learned article on the cult of St. Phokas of Sinope. One can see immediately the scholarship that characterizes his nearly 300 publications, especially the clarity of exposition and broadly informed footnotes that cite, impeccably, all the relevant international literature in German, English, French, Latin and Greek.[1] Though Oikonomides' work occasionally ranged forward into the Ottoman era (the speciality of his very distinguished wife, Elizabeth Zachariadou), and back to the fourth century, the institutional history of the middle Byzantine period formed the core of his scholarly activity.

Successful studies under Dionysios A. Zakythinos at the University of Athens led to a first great departure in his life, when he traveled to Paris in 1958 and began work under Paul Lemerle, the leading Byzantinist of that time and place whose inspiration marked a whole generation of scholars from Paris to Moscow, and beyond. At the same time, to the great good fortune of Byzantine studies generally, Nikos Oikonomides came under the influence of the leading sigillographer, Father Vitalien Laurent. From him, Oikonomides learned the secrets of deciphering and interpreting those miniature monuments to the workings and personnel of Byzantium's incomparable bureaucracy, the lead seals. In their tens of thousands, they are all that survive of as many documents, records and official transactions issued between late antiquity and 1453. Surely his Parisian days accounted for Oikonomides' deeply francophone and francophile attitudes, attitudes which would shape his work, his fondness for his New World home (and Voltaire's wry words for it – "quelques arpents de neige") and, of course, any well-turned phrase in his treasured second language.

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[1] "Ἅγιος Φωκᾶς ὁ Σινωπεύς. Λατρεία καὶ διάδοσις αὐτῆς', *Ἀρχεῖον Πόντου* 17 (1952), 184–219. Oikonomides' bibliography is catalogued in the organ of the Institute for Byzantine Research, Athens: Σύμμεικτα 15 (2002), 12–32.

From the beginning, Oikonomides' work showed certain constants, which he also impressed deeply, if gently, on his students. First, historical study of Byzantium required thorough mastery of ancient and medieval Greek, devoid of any illusions that native speech of the modern tongue could substitute for rigorous philology. Second, history was an empirical discipline: it was written from documents, and those documents and the literature about them needed to be mustered exhaustively and critically. Third, Oikonomides judged the publication of source materials, previously unknown or poorly published, the imperious need of modern Byzantine studies. Familiarity with the manuscripts that conveyed the texts was a natural and pleasant corollary, especially if it required return to the great libraries of beloved Paris. Although his bibliography abounds in interpretive studies, Oikonomides carried that task out admirably in terms of both the high quality and the volume of his production, particularly with respect to the great monastic archives of Athos and lead seals. Finally, the past was to be approached serenely. He was deeply proud of his native land and people. Yet Oikonomides never allowed into his seminar or his work the kind of petty chauvinism that disfigured so much of Balkan and other Byzantinology in those days. We were invited to read works on both sides of the vexed question of the Dobruja, and gently, humorously, and critically guided through the thickets of ethnicity and historical distortion.

Fortune favored the prepared mind of Oikonomides with more than one insight and discovery. A splendid example came when he unearthed in an Escurial manuscript an unknown tenth-century *taktikon*, one of those invaluable internal guides to the structure and precedence of the Byzantine administration. It is revealing of the profound modesty of the man that he systematically eschewed referring to it with the name that Byzantinist tradition would have urged – the Oikonomides Taktikon. The subject of his Parisian doctorate (3e cycle), this text would lead him toward one of his masterpieces, the edition, translation and commentary of all the imperial precedence lists (1972).[2] By sorting out, editing and explaining all known versions of these intricate texts of the ninth and tenth centuries, Oikonomides resolved or illuminated countless points of crucial detail in the history of Byzantium's elaborate administrative structures. By laying them side by side, he firmly grounded the history of the expanding empire and its adapting government. It remains the most comprehensive, concise, and reliable guide to the offices and dignities of the Byzantine empire at its zenith. Notwithstanding its stout binding, this volume weathered faster than any contemporary on the shelves of Dumbarton Oaks, and one can think of no truer testimony to the frequency with which Byzantinists from around the world referred to it.

From Paris, Oikonomides returned to Greece for what should have been a glorious ascent to the pinnacle of Hellenic scholarship. But the winds of turbulence and tyranny were not to have it so. The rule of the colonels allied with Oikonomides' political engagement and native honesty to drive him to a second great departure, toward a much different clime. Nikos and Elizabeth moved to the French-speaking world's second largest city in July 1969. There he would bring true international distinction to the Department of History of the Université de Montréal, and serve it twice as chairman. Both his daughters were born there, and he much enjoyed the city's cosmopolitan, francophone flair, and large Greek community. A lesser man might have complained at a harsh climate which so differed from his native land, or resented that his circumstances precluded a larger following of the most advanced graduate students. Oikonomides never let such feelings show, despite an internal assessment of the situation that was devastatingly accurate. True to his gentle and humorous way, he expressed his sentiments indirectly. Once, arriving from Montreal into a Toronto winter day of about -5° Celsius, he looked around and observed with barbed pleasure: "How nice it is to be back in the Canadian Riviera!"

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[2] *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX^e^ et X^e^ siècles*, Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique.

To be the man's student was to be held, gently, to very high standards of philology and accuracy of interpretation. It was also to be treated with rare warmth and human kindness. Those who, like this writer, took his graduate seminar when Oikonomides was a visiting professor at the University of Toronto in 1972, will never forget his invitation for a drink in honor of his newly born daughter Catherine. Hungry, hirsute, and clad mostly in the tattered ritual blue jeans of the age, we were ushered into a truly fancy pub and ordered to pick the finest drinks proffered by a rather alarmed waiter. The occasion was a grand one, our teacher quietly offered, and we students deserved the best.

About the same time, his sigillographic competence met the challenge of a lifetime, when Oikonomides was introduced to the massive holdings of Dumbarton Oaks and Harvard University's Fogg Museum of Art. Their magnificent collection of 17,000 lead seals is the greatest single treasure trove of its kind. If correctly read and dated, and subjected to rigorous but complex analysis, these seals promised to yield incomparable new data and insights into the personnel and structure of the middle Byzantine government and church. And so began the long series of summers in the coin room at Dumbarton Oaks, deciphering, transcribing, dating, interpreting these diminutive records of imperial power, its art, ideology and operations, a process which established Oikonomides at the apex of the sigillographic art. Yet as that work approached completion, the very scale of the achievement seemed to condemn it to virtual oblivion. Oikonomides had determined in his own mind how it needed to be published in order to serve the scholarly world with rigor and flexibility. But the cost of such a publication – *hundreds* of plates and countless specially made typographic characters! – was judged too steep, even for the deep pockets of Dumbarton Oaks. In the meantime, Oikonomides shared, generously, of his results, with those who needed them.

The advent of the personal computer finally allowed Oikonomides to cut this Gordian knot. Working with computer specialists from Harvard University, Oikonomides and his collaborators devised a new software, a font specially suited to conveying the ambiguities and graphic signals of the lead seals' miniature inscriptions and monograms. The result has been a new standard reference work in Byzantine sigillography, which catalogues the offices and personnel of the Byzantine empire, province by province, person by person, seal by seal – and photo by photo – in a series of modestly priced volumes, of which four have appeared in ten short years. Dumbarton Oaks became a seedbed for propagating the methods and insights Oikonomides had developed from his teacher Laurent and his own exploration of the Harvard holdings. The results of the summer seminars for scholars and graduate students and colloquia have appeared in an impressive collection of edited volumes, the *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*.[3]

Even before his monumental sigillographic addition to the source basis for medieval Byzantium, Oikonomides' talent for diplomatic and palaeography was at work on his other crucial contribution to renewing the evidentiary base of Byzantine history, the archival records preserved by the monasteries of Mount Athos. Single-handedly he edited, analyzed and interpreted the medieval archives of Dionysiou (1968), Kastamonitou (1978), and Docheiariou (1984) in five volumes of texts and plates, publishing over 120 documents. As part of a distinguished team, he also contributed to the eight volumes of rich records from Iviron (1985–1995).[4] Any scholar would be proud to sign one of these. To have produced so many such works seems almost incredible, especially when one reckons that the overwhelming majority of the documents posed the daunting challenges of records that had never before been published.

At the same time, Oikonomides played an important role in the another pioneering effort headquartered at Dumbarton Oaks and aimed at assuring the foundations of Byzantine studies, the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*. The editors, Alexander Kazhdan and Alice-Mary Talbot, benefited from his role on the Advisory Committee, and all users are grateful for his 38 entries on diverse subjects of Byzantine diplomatic and administration. And any who has used them admires the interpretive flair of his many articles. That flair is unmistakable, for instance, in the acute and imaginative detective work (1976) that uncovered unexpectedly in the omissions of the Fourth Crusade's *Partitio Romaniae* the dismemberment of the Byzantine empire on the eve of the conquest of Constantinople.[5]

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[3] Oikonomides edited vols. 1–6 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1987–1999); vol. 7 was edited by Werner Seibt (id., 2002). Vol. 8 and future volumes are in the hands of Jean-Claude Cheynet and Claudia Sode, and published by Saur Verlag, Munich, 2003–.

[4] *Actes de Dionysiou*, Archives de l'Athos, 4, *Actes de Kastamonitou*, Archives de l'Athos, 9, *Actes de Docheiariou*, Archives de l'Athos, 13, and, with Jacques Lefort, Denise Papachryssanthou, and Hélène Métrévéli, *Actes d'Iviron*, Archives de l'Athos, 14, 16, 18–19, all published in Paris: P. Lethielleux.

[5] 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin à la veille de 1204 et les origines de l'empire de Nicée: à propos de la *Partitio Romaniae*', reprinted in Nicolas Oikonomides, *Byzantium from the Ninth Century to the Fourth Crusade. Studies, Texts, Monuments*, Collected Studies Series CS 369, Great Yarmouth: Variorum, 1992), study XX.

A distinguished and immensely productive career culminated in its third and final move in 1989, when Oikonomides returned to Greece and assumed the chair of Byzantine history at the University of Athens. The national and transnational authority of his scholarship combined with his humane disposition to make this an era of great promise in Greece's own contribution to international Byzantine scholarship. The founding of an interdisciplinary seminar in Byzantine studies – which continues today, and is fittingly and officially known as 'The Oikonomides Post-Graduate Seminar' –, the promotion of links among Athenian and Hellenic institutions, as well as with foreign centers of Byzantine studies, the training of a new generation of Greek Byzantinists to the highest of international standards, all got under way in short order. He equally took some pleasure in prestigious appointments beyond the scholarly world, for instance, to the governing board of the Greek broadcasting service and as President of the Hellenic Cultural Foundation. But this happy period of work on his home soil was not to be the lengthiest of his life. On 31 May 2000, at the peak of his powers, he was felled by a swift and insidious infection which perhaps profited from the iron discipline with which he pursued a heavy work load. Those who had the privilege of knowing Nikos cherish their memories of his blithe optimism and natural generosity and kindness, qualities which tempered the very firm opinions he sometimes held. Those who know him only from his work will admire the rigor, clarity and intellectual probity which inform his immense production.

Twenty five of the twenty nine publications collected in this volume stem from that fertile but sadly abbreviated period of his life. This is in itself a measure of how productive it was. One, the Runciman Lecture, delivered at King's College, University of London, in 2000, (VII) is published here for the first time. The volume represents the characteristic interests and methods of Oikonomides' interpretive work in the final half of his productive life. Focusing on institutions, these studies explore monastic history, taxation, the imperial bureaucracy and administration, the regulation of trade in the capital and provinces, the army, relations with the Slavs, and epigraphy, including one sigillographic study.[6]

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[6] In addition to the bibliography cited above, n. 1, see the evocations of Nicolas Oikonomides by John Nesbitt and Eric McGeer, 'Nicolas Oikonomides, 1934–2000', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000), ix–xii; in *Travaux et mémoires* 13 (2000), no pagination; Jacques Lefort, '*In memoriam*: Nicolas Oikonomidès', *Revue des études byzantines* 59 (2001), 251–4; Helen G. Saradi, 'Nicholas Oikonomides (14.2.1934–31.5.2000)', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 94 (2001), 908–11; Daniel Sahas and Sophia Mergiali-Sahas, 'Nikolaos Oikonomides, 1934–2000', at http://www.byzantium.ac.uk/Frameset_SPBSNews.htm?Obituary_archive/Obituaries_2001.

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I

Tax Exemptions for the Secular Clergy under Basil II

In 1018 the interminable Bulgarian war ended with the triumph of the Byzantine Emperor Basil II. The northern frontier of the empire was once again firmly established along the Danube. The conquered country, terribly devastated from the hostilities, had now to be reorganized under the new regime: themes were created and governors appointed. In an effort to avoid further reaction on the part of the Bulgarian people, Basil allowed them to continue paying their taxes in kind and at the same rate as before. He abolished the Bulgarian Patriarchate but replaced it with the autocephalous archbishopric of Ohrid, which now directly depended from the emperor, and was endowed with important privileges. The archbishop of Ohrid was to have authority over all the bishoprics that had once been attached to his see, though only briefly, under the Bulgarian tzars Peter and Samuel. These bishoprics included those which normally depended on the metropolitans of Thessalonica, Dyrrachion, Naupaktos and Larissa. Zakythinos saw in these measures an attempt to create a powerful state-tool for controlling and infiltrating the conquered population[1]; but it was also in the words of Ostrogorsky, with whom all scholars are in agreement, a master-stroke of imperial policy[2].

The details concerning these measures are known to us thanks to three sigillia: the first most probably issued ca. 1018, the second in May 1020 and

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[1] D. Zakythinos, *Βυζαντινὴ Ἱστορία* (Athens, 1977), p. 439.

[2] G. Ostrogorsky, *Histoire de l'état byzantin* (Paris, 1956), p. 337.

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the third shortly after[3]. They were issued by the emperor on behalf of the "monk" John whom he had appointed as the first archbishop of Ohrid[4]. They owe their preservation to the fact that they were incorporated in the chrysobull which the Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologos issued on behalf of the same archbishopric in 1272[5]. They have been published several times and commented upon repeatedly[6]. Modern scholars have questioned, if not their authenticity, at least whether they are preserved in their original wording. It is true that these sigillia are devoid of certain formulae which are traditional in documents of this nature, and this might arouse suspicion as to their authenticity. On the other hand, I think that their original wording may well have been as rough and direct as it is preserved in the extant texts. Basil is known for his revulsion for literary formulae and for his preference for a direct and even rustic style which he used in his letters. This is what Michael Psellos tells us[7] and it is confirmed by one of Basil's letters, reproduced in the memoirs of Kekaumenos[8].

Basil's grant was made to John, archbishop of Ohrid, in response to his request that the emperor put down in writing the numbers of clerics and paroikoi who were to serve the churches of his see and of his suffragan bishoprics (ᾐτήσατο ὁ τοιοῦτος ἐγγράφως ἔχειν τοὺς ὀφείλοντας ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς ἐνορίας αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἐπισκόπων αὐτοῦ κληρικοὺς καὶ παροίκους ὑπηρετεῖν). The emperor granted his request though he had to proceed with caution and adopt a piecemeal approach, wary of the reaction he might provoke in the process of determining the boundaries of the newly created archbishopric. Seventeen sees are enumerated in the first document of ca. 1018, another eleven are added in May 1020, and another two in the third document —a grand total of thirty sees. Each of them was granted a differing number of clerics and (usually the same number) of paroikoi: forty clerics and forty paroikoi (Vodena, Dristra, Sofia, Nish, Belgrade, Skoplje, Petros); forty clerics and thirty paroikoi (Ohrid, Kastoria, Glavinitza); and smaller numbers (30:30; 15:15; 12:12) for the rest. Most probably these figures do not reflect a specific reality prevailing in each see, such as the number of churches or its other real needs[9]. As we have only round numbers, one assumes that the emperor fixed upon them by taking into consideration perhaps the size of each bishopric, or other elements among which prestige (or intended prestige) or tradition were not the least decisive. In the case of Kastoria, for example, the emperor declares that in the past its bishop used to have more clerics and paroikoi than he was presently granted, but that he had to accept now just forty and thirty respectively in order not to exceed the numbers granted to the archbishop of Ohrid. It is clear that in this instance prestige was given precedence over tradition. But what tradition? It is not clear what the emperor means by his reference to the past. As Kastoria fell to the Byzantines at approximately the same time as Ohrid[10], one might suppose that the number of clerics and paroikoi was reduced for a specific reason (reprisals for a stubborn resistance perhaps?).

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[3] F. DÖLGER, *Regesten*, nos. 806, 807, 808. Cf. B. GRANIĆ, 'Kirchenrechtliche Glossen zu den vom Kaiser Basileios II dem autokephalen Erzbistum von Achrida verliehenen Privilegien', *B*, 12 (1937), 395-415, and, closer to us, S. LIŠEV, 'Njakoi danni za feǫdalnite otnošenija v Bŭlgarija prez X v', *Izvestija na Instituta za Bŭlgarska Istorija*, 6 (1956), 416-425; G. LITAVRIN, *Bolgarija i Vizantija XI-XII vv.*, (Moscow, 1960), pp. 73-77.

[4] John's successor, Leo, is known to have been the first Greek archbishop of Ohrid. One may thus assume that John, who died in 1036 (SCYLITZES, p. 400) was a Bulgar and that he was the patriarch of Ohrid before the conquest who was demoted by Basil to the rank of autocephalous archbishop. This would explain why Basil says that he "found" him at Ohrid (ἐν τῇ Ἀχρίδᾳ τὸν νῦν εὕρομεν ἀρχιεπίσκοπον) and speaks of his "confirmation" (ἐκυρώσαμεν) and not of his election and nomination. It should be added in this respect that when speaking of the past, under tzars Peter (before 971) and Samuel (before 1014), Basil constantly speaks of archbishops and not of patriarchs of Bulgaria; consequently one should not expect the patriarchal past of the see or of its pastor to be mentioned in these documents.

[5] F. DÖLGER, *Regesten*, no. 1992.

[6] They are easily accessible in H. GELZER, 'Ungedruckte und wenig bekannte Bistümerverzeichnisse der orientalischen Kirche II', *BZ*, 2 (1893), 42-46. A more recent edition that lists the relevant literature is by J. IVANOV and Vasilka TŬPKOVA-ZAIMOVA, in *Izvori za Bŭlgarskata Istorija* 11 (Sofia, 1965), 40-47.

[7] MICHEL PSELLOS, *Chronographie*, ed. E. Renauld, I (Paris, 1926), p. 19.

[8] *Sovety i rasskazy Kekavmena*, ed. G. LITAVRIN (Moscow, 1972), pp. 280,19-283,3.

A different explanation is given in the case of the bishopric of Vodena. In granting it forty clerics and forty paroikoi, the emperor expressed his gratitude to Vodena for being favourable to him during the war, and thus opening the gateway to the whole of Bulgaria[11]. For this reason the emperor wished to raise it above the best of the sees, but as he did not want to place (the bishop) above the archbishop (ὑπερκεῖσθαι) and thus give rise to feelings of superiority (ὑπεραίρειν), he placed Vodena at the same rank as Ohrid, granting the bishop only ten (men) beyond the archbishop's seventy.

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[9] Litavrin, *Bolgarija, loc. cit.*, p. 77, rightly thinks that these are not all the clerics of each see but rather those to whom an exemption was granted; on the contrary, Granić, *loc. cit.*, p. 401, considers that these figures reflect the actual size of the sees.

[10] Scylitzes, pp. 355, 363.

[11] One should note however that Basil had to besiege and capture Vodena more than once; but it is true that in the last phases of the war this fortress had served as a base for the Byzantine operations against Bulgaria: Scylitzes, pp. 345, 352, 356. - It should be added here that J. Ivanov and other scholars (including Lišev, supra, note 3), having spotted the spelling Βοδίνης in the sigillion, interpreted it as Βιδίνης, i.e. Vidin on the Danube, a fortress that Basil II had conquered during one of his first invasions in Bulgaria (in 1002: Scylitzes, p. 346) and which could well be considered as the city that opened to the emperor the gates of Bulgaria from the North.

There are inconsistencies in this reasoning, for how can the emperor speak of equivalence if the number of paroikoi of Vodena was 33% higher than that of Ohrid? Perhaps only the number of clerics was considered as an important criterion, at least as far as prestige was concerned, but against that explanation clerics and paroikoi are reckoned together in one line further down. Be that as it may, it is interesting to note that in the case of Vodena the imperial wish to reward the city seems to have been the significant factor in deciding what should be granted to the see.

It is even more striking that several other bishoprics were granted forty clerics and forty paroikoi like Vodena, and yet no comment is made or explanation given for the fact that the number of their paroikoi exceeded by ten those of the archbishop's. I have no explanation to offer for this peculiarity at this stage.

Despite these changes therefore, Basil wished by and large to maintain the *status quo* of the Bulgarian Empire. This is confirmed by a passage in the first sigillion which explains in what exactly the privileges granted to the Bulgarian Church consisted. It decreed that its clerics[12] should be exempt from the *oikomodion* and from all other burdens, as they had been in the past under Samuel (ἵνα ἐξκουσεύωνται οἱ τοιοῦτοι πάντες κληρικοὶ ἀπό τε οἰκομοδίου καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἐπηρειῶν, ὡς ἐξκουσεύοντο καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ Σαμουήλ). The content and extent of the privileges are stated mainly in these two lines of the first sigillion, and subsequently confirmed in general terms. Yet in the sigillion of May 1020 the emperor felt the necessity to specify that henceforth the archbishop will be entitled to collect the *kanonikon* from all churches under his jurisdiction. He also forbade all Byzantine strategoi, tax collectors and other officials from imposing exactions (περικόπτεσθαι = "loot") on the monasteries, churches or church property in Bulgaria. On the contrary, he insisted that they should show respect to the archbishop and to his suffragan bishops. These additions have obviously nothing to do with the original privilege, but were introduced to put an end to a situation that arose after the conquest. For it appears that Byzantine administrators, once installed in Bulgaria, tried to take advantage of the ecclesiastical institutions not covered by the initial privilege, so that the emperor had to intervene and forbid formally exactions whose legality was questionable. Hence the pejorative and unusual verb περικόπτεσθαι.

The technical term ἐξκουσεύω designates a privilege granted by a lay authority (usually the emperor) to an individual, commune, or institution exempting them from a general (usually fiscal) obligation. Normally it concerned all kinds of taxes and corvées, but not the basic land tax, exemption from which was rare in Byzantium and only granted under exceptional circumstances and in conformity with special procedure.

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[12] I assume that we have here a shortened expression and that the word "clerics" should be understood as containing also the paroikoi, as it would make no sense to have the exemption for only some of the persons "granted" to the bishops.

In this particular document, the emperor confirmed a privilege that had already existed under Samuel. The main obligation from which the clerics were exempted was the *oikomodion,* a tax which undoubtedly existed in Samuel's empire, but which is mentioned here for the first time. Consequently, I think that Cankova-Petkova[13] was right in assuming that the *oikomodion* was the basic land tax collected in Bulgaria before its conquest by Basil II. As Scylitzes informs us[14], at the time of Samuel each Bulgarian household possessing a pair of oxen had to deliver one modios of wheat and one of barley annually to the state —hence the Greek name *oikomodion* (from oikos = household and modios) was used to render a Bulgarian term that remains unknown to us. He also tells us that this same system of taxation was maintained in Bulgaria after 1018 and that a big revolt broke out when twenty years later the government of Constantinople tried to replace it by the tax in money that was paid in the rest of the empire.

For the Bulgarians the *oikomodion* was the main land tax, but it was so small that the Byzantines regarded it as a secondary tax, and for this reason it was included in the *exkousseia* in 1018. Subsequently it was also adopted in Byzantium, although always as a secondary tax, and it is mentioned regularly in all kinds of texts and applying to all regions from the mid-eleventh century onwards. We do not have to insist here on its further history[15]. What has to be remembered is that it was a Bulgarian tax in the process of being adopted by the Byzantine administration, and that the overall *exkousseia* was granted to a limited number of clerics and paroikoi in the context of "pacification" of the newly conquered Bulgaria.

There is a similar document issued by Basil II some twenty years earlier in comparable circumstances on behalf of Southern Italy. In 999 the newly appointed katepano of Italy Gregorios Tarchaneiotes was busy quelling a revolt of local potentates[16]. To do so, he had to distribute privileges to

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13. Genoveva CANKOVA-PETKOVA, *Za agrarnite otnošenija v srednovekovna Bŭlgarija XI-XIII v.* (Sofia, 1964), pp. 91-95.

14. SCYLITZES, p. 412.

15. The bibliography concerning *oikomodion* (and its slavic equivalent, *komod)* is vast. See F. DÖLGER, *Byzanz und die europäische Staatenwelt* (Ettal, 1953), p. 251-256; G. OSTROGORSKY, *Pour l'histoire de la féodalité byzantine* (Bruxelles, 1954), p. 359; J. BOMPAIRE, 'Sur trois termes de fiscalité byzantine', *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique,* 80 (1956), 625-631; LITAVRIN, *Bolgarija,* pp. 310-314; M. ANDREEV, *Vatopedskata gramota* (Sofia, 1965), pp. 103-104; B. FERJANČIĆ, in *BZ,* 61 (1968), 321; *Dionysiou,* pp. 153-4.

16. For my latest discussion of the measures used in quelling this revolt, cf. N. OIKONO-

those who remained faithful to the emperor in order to secure their support. He first of all issued a privilege to Chrysostomos, the archbishop of Bari and Trani, granting him the *exkousseia* of thirty six priests of the great church of Bari and of sixty priests of Trani[17]. In the document it is specified that the priests would be free of corvées, of billeting *(metaton)* and of the construction of fortresses, but that they would be obliged to work with the rest of the inhabitants of these cities in repairing their own fortifications when the need arose. Here we are in a classical Byzantine context: traditionally ecclesiastics were exempt from lowly corvées *(munera sordida)* with the exception of all labour required in a military emergency or for repairs of the city walls[18]. In other words they were subject to emergency requisitions but were exempt from all secondary ones and, above all, from the burdensome *adaeratio* of the various *munera* that could be exacted at anytime and largely depended upon the greediness of the tax collector.

Yet there is a change and an important one. What used to be a general privilege for all priests, now appears as a special favour granted to the archbishop, and concerns only a limited number of those under his jurisdiction. The privileges of Bari and Ohrid are identical from that point of view. When did this change take place?

Fiscal privileges for churchmen had been granted by the emperors before. Their real extent has been the subject of long and heated scholarly discussions[19], yet there has been general agreement that they concerned at least the *munera*, especially the *munera sordida*, the *epereiai* of the middle Byzantine period. These grants of monetary exemptions had their ups and downs. The fiscal measures of Emperor Nicephorus I (802-811) are the best

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MIDES, 'Theophylact Excubitus and his Crowned Portrait: an Italian Rebel of the Late Xth Century?', *Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας,* 4/12 (1984), 201.

[17] Document published in G.B. BELTRANI, *Documenti longobardi e greci per la storia dell'Italia meridionale nel Medio evo* (Rome, 1877), pp. 11-13 and summarized by Vera von FALKENHAUSEN, *La dominazione bizantina nell'Italia meridionale dal IX all' XI secolo* (Bari, 1978), p. 187, no. 27.

[18] Cf. Epanagoge 9, 16; Basilics V, 1, 4; V, 1, 6; V, 3, 6.

[19] The basic systematic study is by G. FERRARI dalle SPADE, 'Immunità ecclesiastiche nel diritto romano imperiale', *Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti,* 99 (1939/40), 107-248; it has been developed by other scholars who studied the protobyzantine fiscal system, such as: L. BOVE, 'Immunità fondiaria di chiese e chierici nel basso impero', *Synteleia V. Arangio-Ruiz* II (Naples, 1964), pp. 886-902; J. KARAYANNOPULOS, *Das Finanzwesen des frühbyzantinischen Staates* (Munich, 1958), esp. pp. 196-211; A.H.M. JONES, *The Later Roman Empire* I-III (Oxford, 1964) and W. GOFFART, *Caput and Colonate. Towards a History of Late Roman Taxation* (Toronto, 1974), passim; T.G. ELLIOTT, "The Tax Exemptions Granted to Clerics by Constantine and Constantius II', *Phoenix,* 32 (1978), 326-336. Further bibliography is mentioned in the excellent recent synthesis on the matter by Eleutheria PAPAGIANNE, *Τὰ οἰκονομικὰ τοῦ ἔγγαμου κλήρου στὸ Βυζάντιο* (Athens, 1986), pp. 35-48.

known example of an effort to control church privileges;[20] yet they still existed in the early tenth century, since not only are they mentioned in several enactments issued at that time (cf. supra, note 18), but also attested in letters of the Patriarch Nicholas Mystikos who lived in the first quarter of the tenth century. In a letter dated ca. 915-918, the Patriarch mentions an imperial document, confirmed by several successive emperors, that was kept in the skevophylakion of Saint Sophia and guaranteed that all priests should be exempt from all extraordinary obligations (πρὸς τὸ ἀνεπηρέαστον τῶν ἱερέων); in another letter addressed to a state official, the Patriarch requests that some members of the clergy of Saint Sophia should be exempt from providing either extraordinary taxes or corvées (λειτουργίαις)[21]. In other words, the traditional privileges continued to function in Nicholas's time, though their very existence was probably challenged by some representatives of the authorities —hence the Patriarch's intervention.

We have no other precise information on this subject until Basil's sigillia analysed above, and which show that by the end of the tenth century these privileges had been abolished. This is in conformity with imperial policy pursued in this period in which the emperors deployed major efforts to contain the expansion of big landownership, including ecclesiastical, especially under Nicephoros Phokas and Basil II in the early years of his reign. As the main motive of these policies was to guarantee the regularity of the fiscal revenues to the state, it is easy to imagine that at some stage during this period the traditional privileges pertaining to the clergy were abolished.

Completely abolished? It is hard to imagine that a perennial institution like the Church would have given in to complete abolition of its acquired rights without offering stiff opposition to the state. It seems to me more reasonable to assume that the state, instead of abolishing the privilege completely, tried to control it by establishing limited numbers of exempt clerics for each diocese. It thus reserved to itself the right to increase the number when it so wished in order to win the favour of a prelate or of the inhabitants of a region. The two cases of Basil II examined above substantiate this interpretation. We know of similar instances in later periods, the most eloquent of these being the exemptions concerning numerous clerics and paroikoi granted to the metropolis of Kerkyra in the twelfth century[22]. In practical terms this was a minor change, but a major one in mentality. What appears to us as a major gift, is in fact a limitation of pre-existing privileges. In contrast to the Late Roman situation, there is a fundamental shift in the attitude of privileges. In the Late Roman Empire traditional privileges concerned a whole class of individuals, while the "gifts" of Basil II reflect all the characteristics of medieval privileges, i.e. exceptional treatment granted —or increased or diminished, cf. the case of Kastoria— by the sovereign to individual cases in anticipation of, if not in exchange for, the favours of the recipient. The difference is essential. Moreover, what was initially, in the Byzantine case, a real limitation of the extent of the privilege, ended up by becoming a loosening by the institution of the tight structure of the monarchic state in favour of the centrifugal forces of the privileged aristocracts, among whom the church formed a part. The Late Roman privilege concerned whole classes of servants of the state, who were entitled to it as long as they occupied their position or dignity, *contemplatione dignitatis atque militiae, laborum contemplatione*[23]. As these privileges concerned automatically large numbers of people, their distribution had to be parsimonious, their limits clearly defined and strictly enforced. The medieval privileges, on the contrary, emanating from a personal and exceptional favour could be granted easily for each specific case, without a clear awareness of the possible accumulation of such privileges and their results on the finances of the state. These privileges could easily be considered as hereditary, especially when granted to members of large and powerful families. They were easily granted and in large numbers in moments of political instability, when local magnates —or church representatives, like those who obtained Basil's exemptions— could influence or even bring pressure to bear on the central authority. A procedure therefore that was introduced with the idea of limiting the special privileges of the church, ended up by reinforcing them at the expense of the state.

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[20] They are described in several passages of Theophanes the Confessor, ed. De Boor, I, 486-487, cf. 488, 489.

[21] Nicholas Mystikos, *Letters*, ed. and trans. by R.J.H. Jenkins and L.G. Westerink (*CFHB* 6, Washington, DC, 1973), nos. 37 and 152; similar information from earlier sources: cf. A.P. Każdan, *Derevnja i gorod v Vizantii IX-X vv.* (Moscow, 1960), p. 182.

[22] A correct analysis of this particular case is to be found in Papagianne, *Τὰ οἰκονομικά*, pp. 200-201, who also mentions other parallels. On the clerics see also N. Svoronos, 'Les

A second essential difference concerns the recipient of the imperial privilege. In the Late Roman tradition, it was the person providing certain services, as for example the many individual priests of the empire, who because of their capacity as priests profited from the exemptions. That is to say, the privileges were granted by the state to all and each of the beneficiaries directly and individually. On the contrary, in the case of Basil II (as well as of his successors) the privileges were granted to the archbishop or metropolitan and eventually to the suffragan bishops (as in Ohrid) with the

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privilèges de l'église à l'époque des Comnènes: un rescrit inédit de Manuel Ier Comnène', *TM*, 1 (1965), 361, note 175.

[23] FERRARI, *Immunità*, pp. 142, 144.

obvious intention that the prelates should distribute these specific exemptions to some of the individuals within their sees, free from control of any superior authority, provided they did not exceed the prescribed number. Consequently, the new approach created automatically a client relationship between the prelates and their subordinates.

It is significant also in this respect that from the tenth century onwards the exemptions enjoyed by the clerics were granted together with those referring to the paroikoi, i.e. dependent peasants. However it seems to me that the clerics must be regarded as a category distinct from that of the paroikoi. In return for services to the church (ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις... ὑπηρετεῖν, says Basil II) they received as part of their remuneration the exemption that was attached to a piece of land (κληρικοτόπιον), and possibly the land itself as well. Thus the clerics profited from an exemption received through their bishop. In the circumstances one can imagine various possibilities for alternative or different arrangements. Some clerics (especially if the bishop was particularly greedy) may have leased land from the bishopric and were thus assimilated with the lay paroikoi. These paid their taxes through the bishop; their exemption from certain fiscal burdens profited mainly the bishop, who received at least part of the exemption and who was thus in a better position to attract to his lands the manpower necessary for their cultivation, by offering prospective lessees more advantageous conditions than those of non-exempt landowners[24]. The fact that the two categories shared a similar lot explains why the term κληρικοπάροικοι was created, a term that I am inclined to consider, at least for the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as a collective noun (clerics and paroikoi, cf. γυναικόπαιδα) which designated the "posts" of exempt clerics or paroikoi granted to a given see by the emperor[25]. At the time the grant was issued, a distinction was made between the two categories of men, the clerics and the paroikoi, though later modifications in the numbers were possible —and in fact were made— according to the whim of successive bishops.

Basil II, the emperor who most of all had defended the centralized state and fought against large landownership by trying to limit the privileges of the aristocracy and the church, ended up by introducing (or tolerating) measures that in fact precipitated the "feudalization" of the empire.

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[24] I have tried to show that the advantages of an *exkousseia* were usually shared between the landlord and his paroikoi in: ''Η Πεῖρα περὶ παροίκων', *'Αφιέρωμα στὸν Νῖκο Σβορῶνο*, I (Rethymno, 1986), pp. 232-236.

[25] The term is thoroughly studied by PAPAGIANNE, *Τὰ οἰκονομικά*, pp. 186-216. See also G. LITAVRIN, *Vizantijskoe Obščestvo i Gosudarstvo v X-XI vv.* (Moscow, 1977), p. 87. My interpretation of *κληρικοπάροικοι* as a collective noun is supported, I think, by the fact that in the sources the term always appears in the plural. See also E. VRANOUSI in *Σύμμεικτα*, 7(1987), 28-9.

II

La brebis égarée et retrouvée: l'apostat et son retour

Toute association, pour peu qu'elle soit militante, prévoit des traitements particuliers pour ses membres qui la quittent et passent à une association adverse sinon ennemie. Le principe est valable pour toutes les religions. Mais les moyens pris contre les défections et en vue de la récupération des apostats, malgré l'unicité inchangeable du problème, ont varié selon les époques et selon les contextes historiques, dans lesquels ils ont été décrétés.

Dans la religion chrétienne, dès le début, c'est l'image du bon berger qui a prévalu: celui qui risque sa vie pour son troupeau, qui s'assure que toute brebis égarée y retournera. L'image du berger portant l'agneau sur ses épaules, connue et aimée depuis l'antiquité grecque, fera une nouvelle carrière à l'époque paléochrétienne avec la différence que le berger est maintenant le symbole du Christ et, par extension, l'image que ses évêques sur terre aimeraient projeter d'eux-mêmes et de leurs activités. Ce qui aux premiers siècles était une image touchante et poétique, avec le temps et avec l'imposition du christianisme, finit par disparaître de l'art mais non point de la rhétorique officielle.

L'image du bon berger a un symbolisme qui est sans doute beaucoup plus vaste que celui du retour de l'apostasie; il concerne également tout pécheur, tout transgresseur des normes décrétées par l'église. Nous sommes tous des brebis perdues, si j'ose dire. Mais la brebis perdue par excellence est celui qui, après avoir connu la religion chrétienne dans sa version orthodoxe, quitte le „bon" bercail pour un autre, par définition mauvais.

L'état orthodoxe pourrait paraître figé, étant donné que l'église définissait le dogme (surtout après le rétablissement du culte des images) et que le gourvernement séculier l'imposait. Cette image n'est naturellement pas vraie pour les premiers siècles: au 4e siècle par exemple, le christianisme était encore fondamentalement contesté tant par les paiens, qui étaient encore passablement puissants, que par les chrétiens hérétiques, dont certains, tels les Ariens, ont pour quelque temps dominé la scène ecclésiastique de Constantinople. Puis une certaine orthodoxie s'imposa peu à peu, décidée à Constantinople et, parfois, à Rome, alors que le paganisme, décadent et dépassé, disparaissaît lentement, victime d'une oppression relativement peu violente mais constante et musclée. Entre temps apparaissait la nouvelle religion qui constituera le principal défi du Christianisme, l'Islam: c'était une religion conquérante, avec ambitions œcuméniques. L'apostasie du christianisme vers l'Islam deviendra une source de

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préoccupation majeure pour les dirigeants ecclésiastiques de Constantinople, une préoccupation qui s'accentuera avec l'arrivée des Turcs en Asie Mineure et l'exposition du cœur même de l'empire à leur influence. Lors des conquêtes arabes, les apostats passés à l'Islam étaient en grande partie des hérétiques (nestoriens, monophysites) et, par conséquent, leur perte importait relativement peu au patriarcat; mais avec les conquêtes turques, la chose devint beaucoup plus pénible, car c'était maintenant des orthodoxes qui abandonnaient le bercail pour embrasser la religion des ennemis.

Dans les territoires qu'il contrôlait, l'Islam se comportait en seigneur et, d'habitude sans violence, parvenait à convertir une bonne partie des conquis, en leur promettant une vie meilleure dans ce monde-ci. Les musulmans convertissaient par en haut et faisait tout pour montrer aux chrétiens qu'ils leur étaient supérieurs.

L'autre défi majeur venait des hérétiques. Après le 7e siècle, le gouvernement orthodoxe parvenait à les contrôler en ayant rarement recours à la force. Mais on s'assurait que les hérétiques resteraient toujours en marge de la société. Selon la loi civile, l'hérétique n'avait pas le droit d'accéder à des dignités impériales, ces dignités qui constituaient alors la seule grande distinction sociale et qui ouvraient les portes du sénat. L'hérétique était souvent toléré, pouvait même être protégé en tant que citoyen romain, mais il ne pouvait pas poser comme modèle à la population. Le prosélytisme hérétique, qui a naturellement toujours existé, devait se faire discrètement, par contact personnel, de bouche à oreille, pour ainsi dire, en faisant appel au sens de la justice et en exploitant les faiblesses de l'église officielle et de ses représentants: le prosélytisme hérétique se faisait donc par en bas.

Comment défendre le troupeau des fidèles? La violence aurait pu être une solution: mais punir l'apostat ne fut point la solution choisie par l'église de Constantinople qui, après tout, a montré un long et conséquent mépris pour la force brutale. D'ailleurs, la force aurait été possible seulement pour les apostats de l'intérieur[1], ceux des pays islamiques étant loin de la portée des autorités constantinopolitaines. La méthode qui fut le plus souvent adoptée, fut celle de la conviction et des pressions morales patientes et pacifiques[2].

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[1] On notera que l'amiral byzantin Nicétas Ooryphas, qui mit à la torture tous les prisonniers arabes qu'il a faits au Péloponnèse en 875–876, à réservé un traitement particulièrement cruel aux apostats (μάλιστα τῶν ἀρνησαμένων τὸ βάπτισμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ: Théophane Continué, Bonn, 311). Mais du contexte il est clair que tous ont été torturés pour leurs actes de piraterie, et non point pour leur foi ou pour leur apostasie.

[2] Ainsi dans la Vie de Sainte Théodora de Thessalonique (éd. ARSENII, Jurjev 1899, 33–34) il est question d'un hérétique que ses concitoyens, „prêtres et laiques" auraient forcé à abjurer. Mais malgré cet acte, il n'avait point changé ses idées hérétiques. Ces concitoyens ne semblent pas avoir considéré l'idée de pressions violentes et l'affaire fut finalement réglée de façon paisible grâce à l'intervention miraculeuse de la sainte. Il va sans dire qu'il ne pouvait pas être question

Les prévisibles malédictions contre l'apostat n'avaient naturellement aucun effet sur lui, étant donné qu'il appartenait déjà à une autre religion, et que par conséquent ces malédictions n'avaient aucune signification. Il avait, pour ainsi dire, échappé à l'emprise de l'église. Mais celle-ci retrouvait automatiquement cette emprise dès que l'apostat décidait de retourner au bercail et de faire à nouveau partie du troupeau, se soumettant ainsi aux pressions sociales du groupe. A quel degré était-il bon de faciliter ou de rendre difficile sinon impossible ce retour? La réponse à la question dépendait de la réalité de chaque moment et des buts principaux que se donnait le patriarcat: éviter l'apostasie en montrant que cette décision serait sans retour? Tendre la main aux brebis égarées et tenter de les ramener au bercail avec des pénitences dures? Ou bien simplifier le retour sans trop de questions? La recherche d'une voie s'imposait mais cette voie était difficile à trouver.

Tournons nous vers les sources premières de ces raisonnements. Le Christ lui-même aurait déclaré que „celui qui me renie devant les hommes sera renié devant les anges de Dieu" (Luc 12,9) et Saint Paul avait insisté sur le thème en affirmant que l'apostasie est illicite (Hebr. 3,12); que les apostats, qu'il compare à des mauvaises herbes, ne doivent plus être acceptés dans l'église (Hebr. 6, 4–9); et que ceux qui renieraient le fils de Dieu meriteraient une peine bien plus grande que celle réservée par les Juifs à ceux qui reniaient la loi mosaique (celle-ci était la peine de mort: Hebr. 10,28). Saint Jean dénonce aussi l'apostat et conseille son ostracisme le plus complet (II Jean 9–11), alors que pour saint Pierre il vaudrait mieux n'avoir jamais connu la vérité plutôt que de la renier après coup (II Pierre 21). Le message du christianisme premier n'a pas d'équivoque: l'apostat est définitivement condamné sur terre et aux cieux; les chrétiens doivent l'éviter (Saint Jean) ou le punir (Saint Paul); son retour à l'église est exclu.

Ces attitudes pures et dures ont vite été nuancées face à la réalité. Avec les persécutions il y a eu des martyrs, mais il y a eu aussi des apostats, des nombreux apostats. De plus, la tolérance envers ceux-ci était déjà prêchée par les chefs d'autres religions. On attribue à Manès, l'iranien du 3e s. qui serait à l'origine du manichéisme, la déclaration suivante: „Je ne suis pas dépourvu de cœur comme le Christ, ni je ne renierai celui qui m'a renié devant les hommes; mais celui qui ment pour son propre salut et par crainte renie sa propre foi, c'est avec joie que je l'accueillerai"[3]. Cette position de Manès, qui se retrouve naturellement chez les Pauliciens et chez les Bogomiles, créera de nouveaux maux de tête à l'orthodoxie; la conversion de ces hérétiques par la force devenait auto-

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d'exercer des pressions sur des apostats qui vivaient en territoire non-chrétien. Voir un tel cas qui est décrit dans la Vie de Saint Lazare le Galésiote: *Acta Sanctorum*, Novembre III, 515-516.

[3] J. Gouillard, Les formules d'abjuration, *Travaux et Mémoires* 4 (1970) 200 cf. note 60.

matiquement inopérante étant donné que ceux-ci étaient autorisés à se parjurer sans trouble de conscience, s'ils étaient menacés. Aussi, dans les formules d'abjuration, l'église tient-elle à jeter l'anathème non seulement sur les doctrines hérétiques mais aussi sur tous ceux qui, suivant le conseil de Manès, jurent leur adhésion à l'orthodoxie tout en gardant leur foi hérétique; l'église ne se souciait pas du fait que cet anathème ne touchait pas et ne pouvait pas toucher ces faux convertis et que cette façon d'agir était en fait l'aveu de sa propre impuissance.

Tout cela n'empêche que l'église triomphante, devenue officielle, chercha l'appui de l'état chrétien, qui semblait aussi être tout puissant à l'époque. L'empereur Justinien est connu pour avoir pourchassé les traditions paiennes. Et le législateur chrétien, ébloui par son triomphe, prenait des mesures draconiennes contre l'apostasie, à savoir contre le retour au paganisme et contre la conversion au judaisme. Ces mesures sont répétées dans les collections juridiques du 10e siècle mais avec quelques omissions significatives.

1) Codex 1, 7, 1: La conversion au judaisme entraîne la confiscation des biens. La clause est reprise telle quelle dans les Basiliques (60,54,22).

2) Codex 1, 7, 3: l'orthodoxe qui embrasse une hérésie, (a) est exclu de la communion des hommes, (b) ne peut pas servir de témoin, (c) n'a pas le droit de léguer ses biens ou de recevoir des héritages, et (d) n'a pas le droit de se répentir en exécutant des actes précis, comme pour les autres pêchés. Les compilateurs des Basiliques (60,54,24) reprennent seulement les paragraphes b et c (témoignage, héritage) et omettent les deux autres qui étaient, au 10e s., considérés comme trop inhumains. Théodore Balsamon, qui reprenait la législation des Basiliques au 12e siècle, tout en signalant cette divergence, ne manqua pas d'exprimer sa reconnaissance envers l'auteur des Basiliques pour cet acte d'humanité. Il faisait la même remarque à propos de la novelle 37 de Justinien, qui lui paraissait également ἀφιλάνϑρωπος[4].

3) Codex 1, 7, 4: Celui qui renie le Christ et qui fait des sacrifices ou invite d'autres a faire des sacrifices (a) ne peut pas bénéficier du droit de prescription; (b) ne peut pas aliéner ses biens (que ce soit par donation, par vente ou par testament), et ces biens passeront *ab intestat* à ses parents, la contestation de ces actes pouvant être faite même après la mort du rénégat. Ces clauses, reprises telles quelles dans les Basiliques (60, 54, 25), s'arrêtent un pas avant la confiscation complète des biens puisqu'elles laissent au rénégat leur jouissance mais lui enlèvent le droit d'en disposer et créent ainsi un motif puissant pour que ses parents restent orthodoxes.

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[4] G. Rhallès-M. Potlès, *Syntagma theion kai hieron kanonon* (Athènes, 1852–1859) I, 196–197.

4) Codex 1, 7, 5: La peine la plus grave, la peine de mort, est réservée à ceux qui exercent le prosélytisme sur des chrétiens. La clause est reprise dans les Basiliques (60,54,26 et 30) et est encore mentionnée par le patriarche Théophylacte (933–956) dans la lettre canonique qu'il adressa à Pierre de Bulgarie; mais déjà ce patriarche déconseillait tant de sévérité, qu'il trouvait peu conforme à l'institution ecclésiastique et à la bonté de Dieu[5].

La loi civile décrétait beaucoup de choses qui auraient pu avoir un sens et être appliquées au moment où le paganisme était sur le point de disparaître. Mais comment appliquer ces lois à d'autres moments? Que faire des chrétiens convertis à l'Islam et de ceux qui les avaient poussés à la conversion? Sous Basile I^er^ le Macédonien plusieurs Juifs convertis au Christianisme sont ensuite retournés à leur religion d'antan sans pour autant s'attirer les peines prévues par la loi[6]. La loi, sans doute jugée trop stricte et inhumaine, commençait à ne pas être appliquée.

Ainsi, lorsque Byzance connaîtra sa mini-inquisition antibogomile sous le règne d'Alexis I^er^ Comnène, les hérétiques seront persécutés pour leur obstination à ne pas obéir à l'empereur, plutôt qu'à cause de leur foi erronnée qui, en elle même, ne semble pas leur avoir attiré une peine quelconque. D'une façon générale, le gouvernement byzantin laissait les problèmes spirituels aux soins plus souples et plus subtils que leur consacrait l'église. Le cas des renégats y était compris.

Une première période de la legislation canonique concernant les renégats va jusqu'au 12e s. et est constituée essentiellement des canons conciliaires des premiers siècles et de leurs commentaires par Aristenos, Zonaras et surtout Balsamon, qui est le plus détaillé et montre un intérêt particulier pour ce sujet; il est aussi le plus tardif, ce qui pourrait expliquer son attitude, étant donné qu'au cours du 12e s. les Turcs avaient fait des progrès notables dans l'islamisation de l' Asie Mineure. La deuxième période commence, nous le verrons, au 13e siècle et continuera pendant toute la Tourkokratia.

Les sources ecclésiastiques classiques abordent les rénégats en tenant compte (a) de leur statut avant qu'ils aient renié le christianisme, (b) de la gravité de l'acte par lequel ils ont manifesté ce reniement, et (c) des conditions dans lesquelles ils étaient soumis en ce moment. Les peines qui leur sont réservées dépendent des facteurs ci-dessus.

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[5] V. Grumel, *Les Regestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople*, No. 789. Cf. *Fontes Minores* 2 (1977) 74. Pour le cinquième siècle voir Maria Pia Baccari, Gli Apostati nel Codice Teodosiano, *Apollinaris* 54 (1981) 538-581.

[6] Théophane Continué (Bonn), 341–342, 691. Peines décrites, avec variantes, dans plusieurs textes. Cf. par exemple, *Fontes Minores* 3 (1979) 101–106.

Les petits enfants et les catéchumènes sont naturellement ceux qui sont le moins affectés par leur éventuel reniement du christianisme. Car les uns et les autres, après leur retour, ont droit au baptême, qui efface tout péché antérieur. Ainsi, ceux-ci ne sont pas empêchés d'accéder ultérieurement au sacerdoce. Par contre, le sacerdoce est inaccessible à tout chrétien qui a une fois renié le Christ; il est même inaccessible à tout clerc qui aurait une fois renié son statut de clerc, car cet acte est considéré comme une démission et une trahison. Ceci est valable même si ce clerc se trouvait alors à un rang mineur, tel celui de l'anagnoste[7].

Le reniement du Christ peut se faire de plusieurs façons: par la participation à des actes hostiles de non-chrétiens contre des chrétiens (p. ex. la participation à des raids de paiens en territoire chrétien); par la participation à des cérémonies non chrétiennes (p. ex. à un sacrifice, ou à la consommation de la viande d' un sacrifice; à des actes de magie, même si ceux-ci ont comme but la guérison d'une maladie, car de cette façon on reconnaît implicitement à la magie des pouvoirs supérieurs à ceux du Christ); enfin par le reniement pur et simple de la divinité du Christ et, circonstance aggravante, par l'exercice de pressions sur d'autres pour faire de même.

Les conditions dans lesquelles ce reniement a eu lieu sont également examinées. Y avait-il nécessité (ἀνάγκη) de commettre cet acte odieux? Par „nécessité" on entend toute pression ou menace qui ait une certaine importance. Menace sur la vie, mais aussi menace de confiscation ou menace d'être chassé de son lieu d'habitation (μετοικεσία). S'il y a eu nécessité, l'église est disposée à se montrer indulgente et à traiter l'affaire comme si c'était une fornication (πορνεία), tout en tenant compte, pour la peine, de la disposition de l'individu au moment du reniement: l'a-t-il commis avec joie ou bien montrait-il clairement qu'il agissait sous pression et contrairement à sa libre volonté? Il va sans dire que le cas le plus grave est celui du reniement volontaire du Christ, lorsqu'il a été commis sans qu'il y ait eu nécessité ou violence.

Il y a force variations concernant les peines spirituelles prévues pour les renégats qui desireraient retourner à l'orthodoxie.

Le canon 62 des Saints Apôtres prévoit l'exclusion complète et définitive de tout renégat. C'est une position extrême qui choqua Balsamon au 12e s. Il note que la loi civile accorde le pardon à celui qui a été forcé de commettre une faute parce qu'il avait peur ou parce qu'il était soumis à violence. Ailleurs (Ancyre 5) il revient à la question de la violence et des excuses qu'elle crée; il cite les Basiliques (10,1) qui déclarent que toute victime de violence garde ses droits de propriété sur les objets qui lui ont été enlevés par la force. Ailleurs, il pose le problème de la violence exercée par les autorités byzantines (Ancyre 3). Mais l'extrême rigueur du canon des Saints Apôtres provoqua son ironie: „la loi de l'église désire que tous soient des confesseurs de la foi". Le seul point sur lequel même Balsamon semble intraitable concerne le sacerdoce; le renégat en est définitivement exclu[8].

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[7] Rhallès-Potlès II, 63.

Les pères du premier concile œcuménique avaient cependant montré la voie de la tolérance. Les canons 10, 11, 12 et 14 de Nicée prévoient douze ans de pénitence pour les renégats volontaires, dix ans pour les soldats, et trois ans pour les catéchumènes, tout en soulignant que le sacerdoce ne leur sera d'aucune façon accessible et pourrait leur être retiré même a posteriori.

Saint Basile (canon 73) est beaucoup plus sévère: le renégat fera pénitence et confession toute sa vie et recevra la communion seulement au moment de sa mort. Ses successeurs, à commencer par Saint Grégoire de Nysse ont considérablement nuancé cette assertion. Et les commentateurs du 12e s. se sont trouvés dans l'obligation de justifier cette sévérité extrême en introduisant ici la notion de la relativité. Jean Zonaras, par exemple, déclarait que „les pères ont prévu des peines conformes à leur époque"... ceux qui vivaient au moment de persécutions étaient moins sévères, alors que saint Basile, qui vivait au moment de la victoire du christianisme, était implacable contre ceux qui reniaient leur foi volontairement, sans qu'il y ait violence. Cette notion de la relativité de la législation, même celle de pères d'église aussi indubitables que Saint Basile, est intéressante dans la mesure où elle montre l'embarras dans lequel se trouvaient les canonistes devant une législation qui n'était pas appliquée et qui était contraire au principe de la charité chrétienne et aux intérêts de l'église à un moment où elle traversait une crise grave, menacée comme elle était par l'Islam et par les hérésies.

Saint Basile (canon 81) prévoit aussi des peines moindres pour ceux qui, lors d'une invasion paienne commettent des actes qui ne conviennent pas aux chrétiens: prêter des serments paiens, ou manger de la nourriture illicite (ἀϑεμιτοφαγία). Pour ceux-ci, il prévoit des pénitences de 8 ou de 11 ans selon les pressions auxquelles ils ont été soumis avant de céder. Dans son commentaire, Zonaras fait la distinction entre le reniement complet de la foi (ἀϑέτησις παντελής) et ces actes, qui sont une souillure (μίασμα), un semblant de reniement (δόϰησις ἀϑετήσεως).

Saint Grégoire de Nysse (canon 2), de peu le cadet de S. Basile, reprend ces dispositions et introduit pour la première fois ici l'assimilation du reniement forcé à la fornication. Et il innove en ce qu'il prévoit (canon 3) des peines pour ceux qui se tournent vers la magie: s'ils le font parce qu'ils ne croient pas au

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[8] RHALLÈS-POTLÈS IV, 470.

Christ, ils seront assimilés aux renégats volontaires; s'ils sont poussés par une necessité insupportable ou par un faux espoir (et Zonaras explique: maladie, oppression par un supérieur, catastrophe naturelle), ils seront assimilés aux renégats involontaires.

Les pères du concile d'Ancyre (canons 1–6, 8–9, 12) se sont beaucoup occupés des renégats et ont essayé d'introduire de nuances aux conditions de leur retour à l'orthodoxie. Ils ont adopté une attitude fort conciliante, en fixant des pénitences de quelques années, définies d'avance et variant selon la gravité de la faute; ils ont même admis que les prêtres renégats auraient pu conserver leur rang d'ecclésiastiques sans pour autant avoir le droit de célebrer. Cette dernière position ne sera acceptée par leurs successeurs, pas même le très compatissant Balsamon[9]. Encore plus légères sont les peines prévues par Pierre d'Alexandrie (canons 1–14) et par Saint Grégoire de Néocésarée (canons 1–7).

Des clauses analogues sont prévues pour ceux qui renient l'orthodoxie en faveur d'une hérésie, mais naturellement avec beaucoup plus de clémence. Saint Athanase parle de ceux qui retournent de l'arianisme, Nicéphore le confesseur de ceux qui retournent de l'iconoclasme. Les deux prévoient des pénitences légères et imprécises, sans doute pour laisser une liberté d'action plus grande aux évêques qui traiteraient de chaque cas particulier. Clauses analogues concernant le Paulicianisme dans 1 Nicée, canon 19.

Voilà la législation sur les renégats qui était en vigueur à la fin du 12e s. C'est tout ce que les commentateurs connaissaient et ceci ne leur plaisait pas. A plusieurs occasions ils ont exprimé leur embarras devant la rigueur de ces lois qui les rendait souvent inopérantes dans les nouvelles conditions du 12e s. Balsamon en particulier ne manque pas une occasion de se ranger du côté de la solution la moins stricte, la plus humaine[10]. Il déclare qu'il ne peut pas y avoir de pêché qui dépasse la philanthropie divine (Ancyre 1). Mais c'est le problème de la conversion à l'Islam en Asie Mineure qui le préoccupe le plus. Il signale qu'en son temps, plusieurs chrétiens pris par les Agarènes (les Turcs) sont mis à la torture et tantôt renient la foi orthodoxe, tantôt embrassent „la religion athée de Mahomet", alors que d'autres se jettent dans l'infidélité de leur propre gré. Et d'ajouter: „tous ceux-ci seront traités selon le canon 81 de Saint Basile, bien entendu après s'être confessés et s'être repentis comme il se doit". En d'autres mots, Balsamon par sa déclaration, donne une valeur générale au canon 81 et ignore la sévérité du canon 73 de ce même père de l'église. On peut imaginer – mais il ne le dit pas lui-même – que cette façon de voir ceux qui ont un moment adopté l'Islam pourrait être due à un sophisme: pour devenir musulman on n'était pas obligé de renier quoi que ce soit, il suffisait de déclarer en public trois fois qu'il y a un seul Dieu dont le prophète est Mahomet. Ceci pourrait facilement être vu comme un „serment paien" et non point comme un reniement du christianisme. D'ailleurs, comme le dit ce même Balsamon[11], les serments avaient à son époque une importance toute relative; car il connaissait plusieurs personnes qui avaient juré d'aller à Jérusalem sans le faire et sans subir de pénitence et il déclare ne pas vouloir insister sur les nombres infinis d'amoureux (ἐρωτομανοῦντας) qui n'ont pas respecté leurs serments. Ailleurs (Ancyre 3) il parle de ceux qui ont été convertis de force par les Turcs et nous apprend qu'ils étaient à son époque facilement réintegrés au troupeau des fidèles après confession et pénitence.

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[9] Cf. sa réponse canonique no. 28 dans Rhallès-Potlès IV, 470.

[10] Saint Basile 73: φιλανϑρωποτέρα; Rhallès-Potlès I, 197: ἀφιλάνϑρωπον.

Le témoignage de Balsamon et des autres commentateurs est sans équivoque: à la fin du 12e s. la seule législation canonique en vigueur concernant les renégats était celle des premiers conciles et des pères de l'église. Ces canons rigoureux, promulgués au moment du triomphe du christianisme, devenaient alors peu à peu inopérants sous la pression des événements. La législation en vigueur avait irrémédiablement vieilli et était critiquée et contestée.

Par la suite, il y a eu changement radical. D'abord apparaît une nouvelle procédure à suivre lors de la récupération d'apostats, attribuée au patriarche Méthode. Ce texte se trouve dans l'Euchologe de Goar[12] aussi bien que dans plusieurs manuscrits, dont un date de l'an 1027[13]. Il simplifie considérablement les choses.

a) L'enfant qui fut pris par les infidèles et renia le Christ à cause de sa peur ou de son ignorance, doit se confesser, se repentir; pendant sept jours, il se fera lire des prières par le prêtre; le huitième jour il recevra la chrème; pendant les huit jours qui suivent, il ira à toutes les réunions des fidèles, comme ceux qui viennent d'être baptisés. Evidemment, il ne peut pas être question de le rebaptiser étant donné qu'il l'avait déjà été avant sa conversion et qu'un seul baptème est autorisé aux chrétiens.

b) L'adulte qui renia le Christ à la suite de pressions ou de tortures, devra jeûner pendant deux quarantaines de jours (trois jours par semaine il n'aura même pas de vin et d'huile), fera des longues prières et des génuflexions autant qu'il peut, et ensuite suivra la procédure des quinze jours prévue pour les enfants (supra a).

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[11] RHALLÈS-POTLÈS IV, 249.

[12] J. GOAR, Εὐχολόγιον, sive rituale graecorum, Paris 1647, 689–693, cf. 693–694.

[13] P. ex. A. DMITRIEVSKIJ, *Opisanie liturgičeskih rukopisej hranjaščihsja v bibliotekah pravoslavnogo vostoka* 1–3, Kiev 1895–1917, vol. II, Euchologia, 190–191, 776, 839, 840, 1026, 1027; et le cod. Coislin 213, que me signale G. Dagron et qui fut écrit à Constantinople en 1027: R. DEVREESSE, *Le fonds Coislin*, Paris 1945, 194.

c) Pour le renégat volontaire, les peines prévues par saint Basile sont reprises telles quelles: il sera reçu par les chrétiens, mais ne recevra la sainte communion qu'au moment de sa mort.

Or les choses se sont encore plus simplifiées plus tard. Dans quelques manuscrits du rituel de Méthode aussi bien que dans la compilation anonyme appelée „le kanonikon de Jean Nesteutès", qui nous est conservée dans le syntagma de Matthieu Blastares du 14e s.[14], les renégats volontaires sont traités différemment: malgré la terrible punition prévue pour le renégat volontaire, l'église montre sa clémence en mettant en avant la philanthropie divine; deux ans de jeûne strict avec beaucoup de prières et de génuflexions (vers les 100 ou 200 par jour) etc.; puis, au bout des deux ans, suivre la procédure des 15 jours décrite ci-dessus. Ceci est très loin des prescriptions de Saint Basile.

Il s'agit sans doute ici de Méthode Ier (843–847), le restaurateur du culte des images, qui est aussi connu pour un décret concernant le retour des hérétiques à l'église orthodoxe[15]. Bien que recopié dans certaines collections de prières, son texte sur les apostats fut généralement ignoré: les canonistes du 12e s., qui se sentaient mal à l'aise avec la legislation traditionnelle n'auraient certainement pas manqué de se référer aux prescriptions d'une grande figure de l'orthodoxie, comme Méthode I le confesseur, si telles prescriptions leur étaient connues. Par la suite, le réglement de Méthode refit surface, probablement au 13e s., à un moment où une rénovation de la legislation canonique concernant les renégats était nécessaire, et était même demandée par les plus grands spécialistes en la matière depuis un demi-siècle au moins. Autrement dit, le texte de Méthode pourrait bien être vu comme la suite que l'église officielle a choisi de donner aux plaintes de Balsamon concernant le problème des renégats dans la réalité de Byzance déclinante. Un deuxième pas dans la même direction sera la variante concernant les renégats volontaires, qui était certainement en vigueur dans la première moitié du 14e siècle.

Ici aussi deux éléments de l'historique de l'apostasie sont mis en relief, sans doute parce qu'ils étaient considérés comme constituant des circonstances atténuantes: le bas âge du renégat au moment de son apostasie (ἄγνοια παιδική, νηπιότης) et la violence tyrannique (βία τυραννική) que les infidèles ont exercé sur lui. Dans un seul cas, on précise que la personne qui revient au christianisme doit abjurer (ἀποτάσσομαι) Mahomet et ses dogmes et son hérésie[16], alors que des abjurations de ce genre sont courantes pour ceux qui reviennent à l'orthodoxie après avoir adopté une hérésie[17]. Or, dans ce texte, le mahométanisme est aussi appelé hérésie, idée qui semble, d'ailleurs, avoir fait fortune au Moyen Age. Les mêmes attitudes se retrouvent dans les documents patriarcaux, avec les quelques cas concrets d'individus qui ont abjuré officiellement des hérésies[18], l'Islam[19] ou la foi latine[20].

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[14] Rhallès-Potlès IV, 432–446, en particulier p. 432–434. Cf. Goar 693 et J. B. Pitra, *Juris ecclesiastici graecorum historia et monumenta* II, Rome 1868, 362–363. Sur la compilation, voir S. Troianos, Οἱ πηγὲς τοῦ Βυζαντινοῦ δικαίου, Athenes 1986, 91, 167.

[15] H. G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich*, München 1958, 497, 498.

[16] Dmitrievskij, 840.

Ces abjurations une fois faites et l'épitimion ecclésiastique et les autres cérémonies une fois accomplies, le renégat retrouvait son statut de chrétien à part entière. Un certificat lui était même délivré à ce sujet, certificat dont un modèle fort intéressant nous est conservé dans le formulaire d'actes notariés du 13e siècle publié par G. Ferrari[21]. Il apparaît sous le titre partiellement inexact d'ἐξομολόγησις Βογομίλων, et nous éclaire sur les pas suivis pour le retour à l'orthodoxie.

On y prend comme exemple un couple, mari et femme, qui se sont laissés convertir au bogomilisme par leurs voisins; plus tard frappés par les remords, ils se sont présentés à un higoumène et ont confessé leur faute; ils en reçurent une pénitence, conforme au droit canon. Puis ils se sont rendus à l'église (de leur ville), ont fait des aveux publics et ont anathématisé le bogomilisme en présence de l'auteur de l'acte, qui semble être un fonctionnaire de cette église[22]. Celui-ci leur dispense l'enseignement nécessaire et les admet au troupeau des orthodoxes en leur fournissant le présent acte comme preuve de leur appartenance à l'église.

On notera, d'abord le fait que les hérétiques apparaissent comme vivant au milieu des orthodoxes et comme y exercant le prosélytisme sans être dérangés par qui que ce soit. Puis, on remarquera la procédure suivie pour le retour à l'orthodoxie: confession et pénitence en privé; abjuration publique; enseignement religieux; et enfin admission au troupeau des fidèles avec un document pouvant servir de preuve de leur orthodoxie. L'existence même de ce document permet de supposer que la tolérance des hérétiques n'était point garantie et que des preuves d'orthodoxie auraient pu être demandées à un moment donné. Il est évident que ce formulaire avait été conçu pour servir en pays orthodoxe.

Mais que devenaient les renégats qui retournaient au christianisme tout en vivant en territoire infidèle? La question était brûlante en ce qui concerne les chrétiens vivant en terre d'Islam. Selon cette religion, les chrétiens et les juifs, en tant que peuples bibliques, étaient tolérés et même protégés en terre musulmane. Mais si jamais ils se convertissaient à l'Islam, il leur était entièrement interdit de retourner à leur ancienne religion. Toute reconversion était immanquablement punie de la peine de mort. Ceci était connu depuis les premiers siècles de l'expansion arabe et devint encore plus évident lors de la conquête turque à partir du 11e siècle. Quelle attitude adopter face à cette situation? Et ce, alors que des conversions massives à l'Islam semblent avoir eu lieu au moment de la conquête d'un territoire par l'armée musulmane[23].

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[17] Goar, 694–696; Dmitrievskij, 422–425, 901, 1025–1026; Gouillard, Formules d'abjuration, *loc. cit.* Cf. Laodicée 7.

[18] Par exemple *Regestes*, nos. 789, 1291.

[19] Par exemple *Regestes*, nos. 1300, 2891.

[20] Par exemple *Regestes*, nos. 1304, 3017, 3083, 3176, 3268.

[21] G. Ferrari, Formulari notarili inediti dell'età bizantina, *Bulletino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano* 33 (1912) 11.

[22] L'auteur parle de lui-même avec l'expression τῆς εὐτελείας ἡμῶν, ce qui montre qu'il n'était pas sensé être l'évêque (ταπεινότης). Je suppose qu'il devrait s'agir du chartophylax de la métropole.

Admettre que ces populations étaient définitivement perdues pour le christianisme? Inacceptable. Leur proposer de retourner ouvertement au christianisme malgré les risques? C'était certainement peu appliquable, malgré le désir de l'église de se créer des martyrs, des confesseurs de la foi, comme disait Balsamon.

L'église a donné de la publicité à ces nouveaux martyrs, d' une part pour renforcer le moral, mais aussi pour rappeler aux chrétiens que l'adoption de l'Islam était un acte qu'on pouvait difficilement révoquer[24]. Les vies des néomartyrs sont pleines de cas de renégats qui furent executés par les Turcs lorsqu'ils ont essayé de retourner au christianisme[25].

D'autre part, l' église de Constantinople a dû se faire à l'idée du cryptochristianisme, à savoir reconnaître les personnes qui exerçaient leur culte chrétien en secret alors qu'ils affichaient en public toutes les apparences de musulmans. Ils agissaient ainsi parce qu'ils ont dû embrasser l'Islam à un moment donné et que, malgré leurs remords, ils n'osaient pas attirer sur eux mêmes le martyre en proclamant leur retour au christianisme. Déjà au milieu du 13e siècle le patriarche Germain écrivait à un secrétaire du nom de Nicolas qui vivait loin du patriarcat, sans doute en territoire turc, et qui retournait au christianisme après avoir embrassé l'Islam, l'assurant de son pardon immédiat dès qu'il aurait anathématisé la religion musulmane. Mais il n'insistait point pour qu'il fasse des actes spectaculaires qui auraient pu le mettre en danger et ne parlait point de pénitence[26]. C'est bien, par ailleurs, l'attitude que semblent avoir adopté quelques néomartyrs, tel Saint Michel le Jeune (Alexandrie), Saint Théodore le Jeune (Malagina), Saint Marc (Smyrne)[27]. Car, même ceux d'entre eux qui sont allés au patriarcat pour confesser leur apostasie et déclarer leur reconversion, sont retournés chez eux et ont vécu paisiblement jusqu'au moment où un ennemi les a dénoncés aux autorités et à ce moment ils ont montré la bravoure qui leur a valu la couronne du martyr. Autrement dit, même dans les vies des saints, la provocation à l'égard de l'occupant n'est point donnée en exemple. Le renégat retourné au christianisme n'est pas forcé à le déclarer en public, mais il doit tenir ferme si jamais son secret est découvert.

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[23] Il semblerait qu'à un certain moment, au moins, l'église aurait fait courir l'incroyable bruit que les Musulmans seraient disposés à tuer ceux qui se convertissaient à l'Islam par simple dégoût de l'apostasie: voir F. Halkin, *Hagiologie byzantine*, Bruxelles 1986, 160-161 (il s'agit d'une version du martyre des 42 d'Amorion).

[24] Le caractère non-révocable de l'apostasie est souligné dès le IXe siècle, à propos des prisonniers que les Bulgares ont faits en 811: I. Dujčev, La chronique byzantine de l'an 811, *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965) 205-254.

[25] Elizabeth Zachariadou, The Neomartyr's Message, *Turcica* 1989.

[26] *Regestes*, no. 1300. Cf. ibid. no. 2891 (reconversion à Constantinople).

Cette idée de la réintroduction du christianisme par en bas dans les états islamiques, idée défaitiste par excellence, est nouvelle mais reflète aussi des attitudes que l'église de Byzance avait prises face aux Arabes. Je note, par exemple, que Photius, le patriarche et grand humaniste de 9e s., recommandait aux prêtres de ne pas refuser d'administrer le baptême aux enfants des Sarrazins qui leur étaient présentés par leurs mères; il espérait que de cette façon ils pourraient s'attirer la grâce de la foi et que leurs mères seraient incitées à les instruire[28]. Il s'agissait naturellement de chrétiennes mariées à des musulmans; les enfants de ces unions ne pouvaient être que musulmans, mais Photius semble avoir voulu rogner sur cette réalité par en bas.

Les résultats de cette politique ne sont pas connus. Il n'en reste pas moins cependant que l'habitude de baptiser les enfants de musulmans semble avoir survécu en terre d'Islam. Des musulmans, Turcs seldjoucides, convertis au christianisme au 12e s., déclaraient à Constantinople qu'ils avaient déjà reçu le baptême en bas age, soit comme protection magique (sans baptême, disaient-ils, ils risquaient de se faire posséder par le démon ou de sentir mauvais comme des chiens), soit parce que leurs mères étaient chrétiennes. Mais le synode du patriarcat n'a rien reconnu de tout celà car les uns considéraient le baptême comme une incantation, alors que les autres n'étaient pas en mesure de produire des témoins pour prouver qu'ils avaient en fait reçu le baptême[29]. La coutume de baptiser les enfants de musulmans est aussi attestée ailleurs[30], encore au 13e siècle, et même plus tard, à l'époque de la tourkokratia, toujours comme une habitude qui n'est pas autorisée par l'Eglise[31]. Sans doute les résultats que Photius aurait pû escompter furent insignifiants et, par conséquent, l'église officielle, tout en laissant faire les prêtres vivant en pays islamique (les textes ci-dessus ne contiennent aucune condamnation), se gardait bien de reconnaître officiellement leurs pratiques.

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[27] Zachariadou, *ibid.*

[28] *Regestes* no. 531.

[29] *Regestes* no. 1088.

[30] Cf. les notes de Grumel, *ibid.*

[31] *Regestes* no. 1367.

Ne pas protester pour l'existence de fidèles qui n'osent pas avouer leur foi, c'est une chose; le déclarer officiellement en est une autre. Cette déclaration vint en plein 14e s., au moment où l'Asie Mineure semblait définitivement perdue aux Ottomans et le patriarche faisait tout pour récupérer ses ouailles perdues. Dans deux lettres, que le patriarche Jean XIV adressa aux habitants de Nicée (mais qui ont probablement servi de modèles pour des lettres à tous les chrétiens d'Asie Mineure sous domination musulmane)[32], le chef de l'orthodoxie essaie d'encourager ses ouailles et examine le problème particulier posé par ceux qui s'étaient convertis à l'Islam au moment de la conquête et qui ensuite reconsidéraient leur choix[33]. Il leur déclare qu'ils ne doivent point désespérer car il n'y a pas de péché qui puisse vaincre la bonté divine. Il leur donne des exemples puisés dans la Bible montrant que le repentir et le retour des apostats étaient possibles et acceptables dans la tradition chrétienne. Il parle des chrétiens qui, pris par les Ismaélites, ont été réduits à l'esclavage, ont été forcés d'embrasser „leur athéisme", et qui maintenant prennent conscience de leur faute, cherchent à la réparer et demandent au patriarcat de les assurer que leur repentir sera acceptable. Jean XIV, au nom de l'église, garantit que s'ils choisissent la vraie foi et rejettent celle des musulmans, ils seront acceptés et guéris et n'auront pas de difficulté pour sauver leur âme à cause de cette faute qu'ils ont commise. Et d'ajouter que ceux qui se repentiront ouvertement, au point de choisir le supplice pour la foi, recevront la couronne des martyrs, comme saint Jacques le Perse; mais ceux qui, ayant peur des punitions, décideront de vivoter en se faisant oublier, tout en appliquant en eux-mêmes et dans leurs actes (ἐνστερνιζόμενοι καὶ ποιοῦντες) ce qui convient aux chrétiens, obtiendront eux aussi le salut, à condition qu'ils s'efforcent de suivre les préceptes divins dans la mesure du possible. En d'autres termes, le patriarche, aux abois devant la perte massive des chrétiens d'Asie Mineure, est prêt à les récupérer à tout prix. Il leur fait miroiter la gloire de la sainteté, mais, de façon plus réaliste, leur offre des garanties pour un statut de crypto-chrétiens. Ici aussi il n'est point question de pénitence. Tout ceci est très loin de la mentalité stricte et militante, contre laquelle s'élevait Balsamon au 12e siècle. Entre temps, Byzance et son église avaient subi des changements de substance.

Les cryptochrétiens ont survécu dans l'empire ottoman et survivent encore de nos jours. Et cette politique de tolérance deviendra la politique officielle de l'église de la Tourkokratia. N'est-il pas significatif que des prières[34] à utiliser lorsqu'un renégat quittait l'Islam pour retourner à l'orthodoxie ont été attribuées à Gennadios Scholarios, le premier patriarche de Constantinople nommé par le sultan ottoman? Ce serait là un acte de résistance.

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[32] *Regestes* no. 2185, 2198.

[33] Fr. Miklosich - J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca* I, Vienne 1860, 183-184.

[34] Une acolouthie pour cette occasion semble avoir été composée par le patriarche Gennadios Scholarios, le premier patriarche après la prise de Constantinople: Dmitrievskij, 775.

L'église orthodoxe, aux moments difficiles, adopta des attitudes conciliantes et moyennes. C'était pour sauver ce qui pouvait encore être sauvé. Et la suite a montré que sa politique, malgré les conditions adverses, fut payante.

Résumons-nous. Ce revirement s'est opéré par étapes: Balsamon protestait au 12e s. devant la dureté des canons concernant les renégats; la situation changea au 13e s. lorsque le règlement de Méthode simplifia considérablement le retour de la brebis égarée au bercail de l'orthodoxie, et changea encore plus au 14e avec les variantes introduites au texte de Méthode et avec les positions adoptées par Jean XIV. En fait, c'est la mentalité du christianisme victorieux et triomphant des premiers siècles, que les Byzantins avaient transformé en orthodoxie victorieuse et toute puissante, c'est cette mentalité qui s'écroulait à partir du 13e s. Les causes matérielles qui ont conduit à cet écroulement doivent sans doute être cherchées dans l'irresistible conquête turque; mais je crois que l'élément idéologique qui a facilité cette prise de conscience, ce fut la chute de l'empire considéré comme éternel – la prise de Constantinople par les croisés. Après cet évènement, l'empire devenait un état comme les autres, une chose relative et soumise aux contraintes. Une interdiction absolue et hautaine n'avait plus de place dans ce nouveau contexte d'humilité.

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III

The First Century of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas

The present study has developed from a seminar held at the University of Athens in 1989–90,[1] and attempts to answer questions asked by visitors to the monastery of Hosios Loukas in Phokis. How is it that such large buildings, luxurious mosaics, frescoes, and marble revetments are found on a mountain slope in a region that has never been especially wealthy, close to the small village of Steiri? Is this grandiose monument the result of local initiative or was it financed from Constantinople? Did the building of this monastery respond to specific needs, and has it been favored by any objective historical conditions? The neighboring ruins of Delphi show that the region had, since antiquity, a tendency to become a religious center, but this pagan tradition does not in itself explain very much.

I. A FUNERARY INSCRIPTION

The discussion opens with an inscription preserved in the lapidarium of the monastery. It is a marble plaque, 0.73 × 0.45 m, broken into at least five pieces now glued together. Initially it was found upside down in the outer western wall of the church of the Panagia; the monks removed it from there during repair work conducted in 1873–78. An ignorant monk, thinking that it was a pagan remain, hammered and broke it, and since then some pieces have been lost. Yet its text can be restored almost in its entirety.

This is a funerary inscription, and, consequently, its position in the outer wall of the church was not the original one. Since it was placed there upside down, it had obviously been salvaged during previous repairs. Its dimensions show that it could not have served as the cover of a sarcophagus. Instead, I imagine it above an arcosolium, marking a grave situated in an enclosed space, in a church or, more probably, in a crypt.

The inscription was first published by G. Kremos,[2] then by G. Sotiriou[3] and by E. Stikas (with a good photograph).[4] Kremos and Stikas dated the inscription to the tenth century and proposed that the monk Theodosios mentioned in it be identified with a disciple of St. Luke (d. 953). Sotiriou dated it to the twelfth century. All three expressed reservations about these datings and declared that a reliable answer could be expected only from a specialist in Byzantine epigraphy.

The inscription is engraved with elongated capital letters of varying height, with many abbreviations and even more ligatures. It includes breathings and accents. The seven lines at the beginning cover the entire width of the marble slab, whereas the last line covers only one-third of it. The text is metrical: twelve dodecasyllabic verses, separated on the stone by crosslets of dots (except for one pellet that appears between verses 11 and 12). At the end of the inscription there is a cross; another cross probably appeared at its beginning, but is now lost. Several spelling mistakes and omissions of accents and breathings occur in the text.

In what follows, the text of the inscription is reproduced as faithfully as possible. Abbreviations are analyzed in parentheses, reconstructions are placed within square brackets, and uncertain letters are marked with a sublinear dot. The text is printed in verses according to the meter. The change of line on the stone is marked by a double vertical line. An apparatus follows the text to display instances where the proposed reading or re-

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[1] The seminar, conducted by P. Vokotopoulos, A. Kominis, N. Oikonomides, and S. Troianos, was entitled "The Monastery of Hosios Loukas and Its Region."

[2] G. Kremos, Φωκικά, Πϱοσκυνητάϱιον τῆς ἐν τῇ Φωκίδι μονῆς τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ, I–III (Athens, 1874–80), II, 173–74.

[3] G. A. Sotiriou, Νεώτεϱαι ἐπιγϱαφαὶ πεϱὶ τῆς τεχνικῆς τῶν μωσαϊκῶν ἐπὶ τῇ εὐκαιϱίᾳ ἐπισκευῶν τοῦ καθολικοῦ τῆς βυζαντινῆς μονῆς τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ. Ἐπιγϱαφαὶ καὶ χαϱάγματα, Ἀϱχ.Δελτ. 6 (1920–21; pub. 1923), 181–82.

[4] E. Stikas, Τὸ οἰκοδομικὸν χϱονικὸν τῆς μονῆς Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ (Athens, 1970), 27–29.

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construction differs from those of previous editors.

[+ Τὰς κ]λ̣ήσεις πᾶσας φερωνοίμως πλουτήσας·⁚·
τάς τε γενηκὰς (καὶ) ‖ [τὰς ἐ]κ̣ βασιλέων [·⁚·]
3 ἐν τῷ ἐράν με τεύξασθαι σ(ωτη)ρίας·⁚·
αἱ κλήσεις ‖ [πά]λι[ν;] μετημείφθησαν οὕτως[·⁚·]
Θεόδωρος πρὶν Θεοδόσιος αὖθης·⁚·
6 ἀνθύπατος δ ἄ̣ψα̣[υστος (;) αὐ]τὸς μονάζων·⁚·
ὁ π(ατ)ρίκιος π(ατ)ρικῶς ὑπη‖γμένος·⁚·
ὁ κατεπάνω κά̣τ̣ω τ̣ῶν ὑψαυχούντων·⁚·
9 ὁ δέ γε βέστης μύστης ‖ τριχηνοφόρος·⁚·
οὐδὲν ἐπ[αγ]ώ̣μ̣ενος τῶν ὑπαρξάντων·⁚·
τῆς λάρ‖νακος πλὴν ἧς κέρδος οὐδὲ̣ν ἄλλω·
12 τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ συγκά‖λυμμα θανοῦσι. +

God endowed me with many appellations, those coming from ancestry as well as those coming from the emperors. But as I strove to attain salvation, the names changed as follows: Theodore became Theodosios; the untouchable(?) anthypatos himself became a monk; the patrikios shrank to a [spiritual] father; the katepano submitted to the haughty; the vestes became a mystic in hairy garb. He did not take with him any part of his fortune, except for this coffin that covers the dead: this is his only worldly gain.

1 [Εἰς κ]λήσεις Sotiriou, κτήσεις Kremos ‖ 2 ἐκ Kremos, Sotiriou: τῶν Stikas ‖ 3 μετεύξασθαι Stikas ‖ 4 πάλιν scripsi· (πᾶσαι;) Sotiriou | μετησίφθησαν Kremos, Sotiriou, Stikas, μετημείφθησαν corr. Sotiriou ‖ 6 δ'ἄψαυστος αὐτὸς scripsi: δ'ανταχτος Kremos, λαμ(πρὸς νῦν αὐ)τὸς Sotiriou, λαμ(πρὸς)..(αὐ)τὸς Stikas ‖ 8 τῶν:ν(ῦν) Sotiriou

Commentary

Lines 1–2. Κλήσεις, literally "appellations," can be titles or names. See, for example, the expression τιμὰς καὶ κλήσεις in the letter addressed by Nicholas Mystikos to Tsar Symeon of Bulgaria.[5] From this phrase we may conclude that Theodore had a distinguished family name (γενικὴ [from γένος] κλῆσις) as well as titles that he had received from (successive?) emperors (κλήσεις ἐκ βασιλέων).

Line 1. Φερωνύμως, "as his name shows": he received these κλήσεις as if they were gifts of God; this is a play on the name Theodore in its initial meaning "gift of God."

Line 3. The word με shows that the inscription was drafted by Theodore/Theodosios himself, or at least when he was still alive.

Line 4. The word πάλιν is not certain. At this point only the lower part of the letters can be read, that is (from left to right), one vertical stroke, an oblique stroke that presumably struck the vertical one at a higher point and that joins another vertical stroke at the bottom; this is followed by the ligature ME of μετημείφθησαν. This combination of two vertical strokes and an oblique one cannot be read as the letter N, because in this inscription the oblique stroke of N meets the vertical that follows at a certain height, never at the bottom; it looks rather like a ligature of AI (cf. the beginning of line 4) or of ΛΗ (cf. the word πλὴν of line 11). My hypothesis is that we have here the ligature ΛΙ with N added at the top of the final vertical stroke (cf. the letter T of κατεπάνω, on line 8).

Line 5. From this line it is clear that Theodore was the person's name as a layman, and that Theodosios was his name as a monk.

Line 6. The reconstruction of this line is problematic. I examined the inscription and can say with certainty that after the word ἀνθύπατος there is a Δ, followed by traces of three letters. Above the first of these three uncertain letters, there are, clearly engraved although not clearly visible on photographs, a smooth breathing and an acute accent: consequently, the first uncertain letter has to be a vowel and, because of the shape of its remnants, it cannot be anything but A. The second uncertain letter consists of one vertical stroke with no horizontal addition at its top. This could be an I, a Φ or a Ψ, if we suppose that the horizontal protrusions of these letters were placed under the break and are now lost. The remnant of the third uncertain letter, an oblique line, could be the top of a X or an Y, as well as of an A, a Δ, or a Λ. We can say with certainty, *causa metri*, that the lacuna must have contained a three-syllable word with the accent on the first syllable, which would contain an α or an αι. For this reason, I propose, without much conviction, the adjective ἄψαυστος (i.e., one who cannot be touched by commoners), which makes better sense than ἄφατος or ἄφαντος.

Line 7. Πατρίκιος - πατρικῶς is another play on words. The expression πατρικῶς ὑπηγμένος means one who is "led to" or "reduced to" being a father. The word "father" would seem to indicate that Theodosios was the abbot of the monastery, "supervising in a fatherly way" his fellow monks. Admittedly, the expression is not crystal clear, but the abbot hypothesis is supported by the following.

Line 8. Another play on the words κατεπάνω - κάτω, the word κατεπάνω literally meaning "one who is above." Here again the phrase is not clear. Who are these haughty individuals (ὑψαυχοῦντες) to whom Theodosios was subordinate? This expression cannot refer to other monks, especially since the inscription was placed in the monastery. Thus it is necessary to consider other authorities to whom Theodosios had to submit: government or, rather, church officials, such as the metropolitan of Thebes. If so, we have here another indication that Theodosios exercised some power inside the monastery and, because of his status, had to submit to the authorities outside it: obviously this points to his being the higoumenos.

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[5] *Nicholas I, Patriarch of Constantinople, Letters*, ed. R. J. H. Jenkins and L. G. Westerink (Washington, D.C., 1973), p. 48.

Line 9. Note the alliteration βέστης - μύστης.

Lines 10–12. The inscription was made for a λάρναξ, that is, a "coffin," a "sarcophagus," or another funerary monument that Theodosios built for himself, using his own money, not the monastery's. This monument was the only belonging that he could take with him in death. As it is very unlikely that this monument was built right after Theodosios' entry into the monastery, it may be assumed that he had kept some contact with his family and its wealth.

The inscription has a flavor of elite society hardly befitting the monastic ideal of modesty. Theodosios took pride in his name, in his titles, in abandoning all this to become the spiritual father of his fellow monks, and in agreeing to submit to non-monastic authorities. And he chose to make all this abundantly clear in the inscription. Although much opposed to the monastic tradition, his attitude seems not to have provoked a scandal. Was it because Theodosios was entitled to special honors, perhaps because he was a donor?

While the collection of dated inscriptions announced by I. Ševčenko and C. Mango awaits publication, I would hesitate to advance a date for this inscription based on epigraphic criteria. But a fairly secure date can be established thanks to internal elements, especially the titles that Theodore received before joining the monastery.

Terminus post quem: from the middle of the tenth century, the office of katepano (or doux) indicated a highly ranked officer (superior to the strategoi), a military commander of the heavy cavalry of the tagmata stationed in provinces close to the frontier. The first high-ranking katepano appears in Italy in 970; the position seems to have been created by Nikephoros Phokas (963–969).[6] Concurrently, during the reign of Nikephoros Phokas, the title of vestes also appears, indicating court personnel attached theoretically to the service of the imperial vestiarium. The title remained in use throughout the eleventh century and is last mentioned around the year 1100.[7] As a result, it is clear that our inscription cannot date before the reign of Nikephoros Phokas (and consequently, the Theodosios of the inscription cannot be a disciple of St. Luke). A secure terminus post quem would be the year 970.

Terminus ante quem: the titles that had been bestowed upon Theodore disappear from the sources in the late eleventh/early twelfth century. The vestes, the anthypatos, and the patrikios are last mentioned in 1087, 1088, and well before 1112 respectively; in southern Italy, which no longer belonged to the empire, they are last mentioned in the period 1099–1111.[8] These titles, which also guaranteed a place in the senate, depreciated in importance because they were freely distributed by various eleventh-century emperors, in particular Constantine IX (who opened the senate to bureaucrats), Constantine X (who opened it to tradesmen and craftsmen), and Nikephoros Botaneiates (who distributed so many titles that the state treasury could not meet the yearly salaries of the title holders). The value of the titles correspondingly declined. Once in power, Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118) endeavored to create a new hierarchy of titles based on the title sebastos and its derivatives.[9] The former titles, now useless, disappeared. A secure terminus ante quem for our inscription would therefore be the reign of Nikephoros Botaneiates (1078–81), if not that of Constantine X Doukas (1059–67).

This general dating between 970 and 1078 (or 1059) can be narrowed down if the titles normally bestowed upon doukes or katepano at different moments within that period are taken into consideration. It is true that there was never a strict correspondence between administrative positions and honorific titles, as the latter were personal in character and could have been bestowed by the emperor for reasons completely unrelated to the administration—for example, to underscore a personal relationship. But the known lists of doukes or katepano show the following characteristics:[10]

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[6] N. Oikonomides, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles* (Paris, 1972), 342, 344; J.-C. Cheynet, "Du stratège de thème au duc: Chronologie de l'évolution au cours du XIe siècle," *TM* 9 (1985), 181–94.

[7] *Les listes*, 294.

[8] Ibid., 294, 295 and *Actes de Docheiariou*, ed. N. Oikonomides (Paris, 1984), no. 3, line 15.

[9] I have described this procedure in "L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XIe siècle (1025–1118)," *TM* 6 (1976), 125–28. The subject has been examined in much more depth by P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 287–93, 309–12 and by J.-C. Cheynet, "Dévaluation des dignités et dévaluation monétaire dans la seconde moitié du XIe siècle," *Byzantion* 53 (1983), 453–77.

(1) From 1050 on, all known doukes or katepano bear the title of magistros or a superior title; consequently our inscription, which mentions the inferior titles of anthypatos, vestes, and patrikios, reflects a situation earlier than 1050.

(2) The titles anthypatos, patrikios, and vestes had been bestowed upon some katepano in the late tenth century; but later, especially during the reign of Basil II (976–1025), who left behind vivid memories of his stinginess in bestowing honorific titles, the katepano descended to the lower level of the protospatharioi; such a katepano was Christophoros Bourgaris, the founder of the Panagia ton Chalkeon in 1028.[11] Katepano accompanied by the titles anthypatos, patrikios, and vestes reappear between 1020 and 1050. This is the period during which Theodore/Theodosios must have had these titles while still a katepano, shortly before deciding to leave the world and retire to the monastery of Hosios Loukas, where he was to become an abbot.

II. The Abbot of Hosios Loukas, Theodosios Leobachos

An abbot of Hosios Loukas named Theodosios Leobachos lived at approximately the same time. This information comes from the typikon of a religious confraternity created in Thebes in order to promote the cult of the Virgin Naupaktitissa, an icon belonging to the nunnery of the same name. The document is preserved in the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, where it seems to have been brought by the Normans after the sack of Thebes in 1147. It has been published several times.[12]

This religious confraternity was founded in 1048. Some fifty years later, the initial document had suffered from time; the confraternity therefore had it written anew, decorated with an image of the Virgin (presumably a copy of the icon of the Naupaktitissa), and confirmed with new original signatures and signa. This is the document preserved in Palermo.

In a special paragraph of this typikon, we find a list of those to be mentioned in the liturgy:

> We will mention our orthodox emperors, our sainted patriarch, the sacred metropolitan of Thebes, the most holy monk and abbot of Steirion, that is, the late kyr Theodosios Leobachos, the abbot of this monastery at that time, the abbess of the nunnery of the Naupaktitissai, and all our confraternity, those alive and those who have died, and all the Christian people.[13]

The enumeration follows hierarchical order: the emperors (of the moment), the patriarch (of the moment), the metropolitan of Thebes (of the moment), the holiest abbot of Hosios Loukas, Theodosios Leobachos, who was dead, the abbot of Hosios Loukas (of the moment), the abbesses of the Naupaktitissai (presumably of the moment), current and former members of the confraternity. Those who are mentioned were in positions of authority at the time of the liturgy (including the abbot of Hosios Loukas); the only deceased persons mentioned are Theodosios Leobachos and former members of the confraternity. Hence it would seem that Theodosios played an important role in creating the confraternity and for this reason was entitled to special mention in future liturgies.[14]

Moreover, the confraternity and the nunnery of the Virgin Naupaktitissa were undoubtedly dependencies of Hosios Loukas. This is why the abbot of this monastery (who does not sign the typikon) had the right to be mentioned before the abbess of the Naupaktitissa: obviously he represented a superior ecclesiastical authority, between the metropolitan of Thebes and the abbess.

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[10] I have used the following lists of doukes and katepano. Antioch: V. Laurent, "La chronologie des gouverneurs d'Antioche sous la seconde domination byzantine," *MUSJ* 38.10 (1962), 221–54; Bulgaria and Paradounavon: N. Banescu, *Les duchés byzantins de Paristrion (Paradounavon) et de Bulgarie* (Bucharest, 1946), 134–69; Thessaloniki: P. Lemerle, *Philippes et la Macédoine orientale à l'époque chrétienne et byzantine* (Paris, 1945), 156 ff; Italy: Vera von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione bizantina nell' Italia meridionale dal IX al XI secolo* (Bari, 1978), 85–100; Edessa, Iberia, Baspurakhan: K. Yuzbashian, "L'administration byzantine en Arménie aux Xe-XIe siècles," *REArm* 10 (1973–74), 139–83 and V. A. Arutjunova-Fidanjan, *Armjane-Halkidonity na vostočnih granicah vizantijskoj imperii (XI v.)* (Erevan, 1980), passim. I also took into account the additions by Cheynet, "Du stratège de thème" (above, note 6).

[11] J. M. Spieser, "Inventaires en vue d'un recueil des inscriptions historiques de Byzance, I. Les inscriptions de Thessalonique," *TM* 5 (1973), 163–64.

[12] The latest edition, considerably better than all previous ones, is by J. Nesbitt and J. Wiita, "A Confraternity of the Comnenian Era," *BZ* 68 (1975), 360–84. Nothing new is to be found in Th. Paliouras, Ἡ ἀδελφότητα τῆς "Θεοτόκου τῆς Ναυπακτιωτίσσης" καὶ ἡ σχέση της μὲ τὴν περιοχὴ τῶν Θηβῶν κατὰ τὴν μεσοβυζαντινὴ περίοδο. Ἀπόψεις καὶ προβλήματα, Ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Ἑταιρείας Βοιωτικῶν Μελετῶν 1.1 (Athens, 1988), 613–23. Even less interesting is the publication of E. Koutsogiannes, Παναγία ἡ Ναυπακτιώτισσα, Ναυπακτιακά 4 (1988–89), 7–24, who ignores the edition of Nesbitt and Wiita.

[13] Nesbitt and Wiita, "Confraternity," 364–65 (text revised): μνείαν ποιουμένων ἡμῶν τῶν ὀρθοδόξων ἡμῶν βασιλέων, τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου πατριάρχου, τοῦ ἱερωτάτου μητροπολίτου Θηβῶν, τοῦ πανοσίου ἐκείνου μοναχοῦ καὶ ἡγουμένου τῶν Στειρίου κῦρ Θεοδο(σίου) τοῦ Λεωβάχου, τοῦ περιόντος τῆς αὐτῆς μονῆς, τῶν ἡγουμενευουσῶν ἐν τῇ τῶν Ναυπακτιτησσῶν μονῇ, τῆς ὅλης ἡμῶν ἀδελφότητος, τῶν τε περιόντων καὶ τῶν προαπελθόντων, καὶ παντὸς τοῦ χριστιανικοῦ πληρώματος. The reading Θεοδο(σίου) is based on the idea that a superscript o is the standard abbreviation for οσ and that the vertical line indicates an abbreviation by omission.

[14] This is a very plausible hypothesis put forth by Nesbitt and Wiita, "Confraternity," 374.

Theodosios belonged to the important Theban family of the Leobachoi, landowners known from the tenth century. Several members of this family had been imperial officials (ἄρχοντες, κουράτορες), others were honored with titles such as σπαθάριος, σπαθαροκανδιδάτος, πρωτοσπαθάριος. They were related by marriage to other influential families of the region.[15]

Theodosios Leobachos was the abbot of Hosios Loukas in 1048, when the typikon of the confraternity was written: most probably he was instrumental in drafting this document. We do not know when he became the abbot or when he died. I believe that this Theodosios Leobachos is the same person as Theodore/Theodosios of the inscription. Both came from an important and wealthy family of the region, both had contacts with the court of Constantinople, both had been higoumenoi, both lived at approximately the same time.

In view of the next argument, I consider it important to stress that in the typikon Theodosios Leobachos is called πανόσιος.

III. The "Hosios" Theodosios, Abbot of Hosios Loukas

The study of the early history of the monastery of Hosios Loukas was renewed in 1969 with M. Chatzidakis' work on the founder of the main church of the monastery.[16] A long discussion ensued and diverging opinions appeared, without weakening the main points of Chatzidakis' theory.[17] Scholarly literature has since been enriched with many new and important publications,[18] and others of equal importance are forthcoming.[19]

Chatzidakis' point of view can be summarized as follows. In the canticle written for the translation of the relics of St. Luke (a Byzantine text, published by Kremos), it is repeatedly stated that the saint's remains have been placed inside a new church built by an abbot named Philotheos for this occasion (ἤγειρε). This Philotheos is depicted three times in the frescoes of Hosios Loukas. (a) In the crypt, at the groin vault above the southeast tomb, there are four portraits of higoumenoi, whose names are known from the accompanying inscriptions. One of them is called Philotheos. We shall return to this painting. (b) Again in the crypt, close to the entrance, we find a composition with many monks; although there is no inscription here, in the first row it is easy to recognize the portraits of three of the higoumenoi also represented in the groin vault; the third of them is Philotheos. (c) At the northeastern chapel of the katholikon, next to the actual tomb of St. Luke, there is a poorly preserved fresco representing the offering of a model of a church by the same Philotheos to St. Luke. Thus the paintings offer unexpected confirmation of the textual testimony.

St. Luke was first buried in his cell, which was at the level of what is now the crypt. A first church was built around his tomb, later rebuilt by Philotheos to become the actual katholikon. The saint's relics were placed inside the monumental tomb, which still exists at the same floor level as the katholikon.

When did this happen? It must have been during the eleventh century, as almost all scholars concur that the monastery's pictorial decoration dates from then.[20] On the other hand, it is clearly stated in the canticle that the translation of the relics occurred on the third of May, which coincided with the feast of the Ascension: in the eleventh century, this coincidence occurred only three times, in 1011, 1022, and 1095. Chatzidakis chose the year 1011, because the author of the canticle speaks of "invasions of the Scythians," a phrase that must have been written before the abolition of the state of the Bulgar sovereign Samuel (cf. note 49 below).

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[15] See N. Svoronos, "Recherches sur le cadastre byzantin et la fiscalité aux XIe et XIIe siècles," *BCH* 83 (1959), 73–75 and Nesbitt and Wiita, "Confraternity," 374.

[16] M. Chatzidakis, "A propos de la date et du fondateur de Saint-Luc," *CahArch* 19 (1969),,127–50.

[17] Shortly after the publication of this article, E. Stikas criticized Chatzidakis' point of view in an appendix to his Τὸ οἰκοδομικὸν χρονικόν; Chatzidakis replied, adding new arguments in favor of his theory: Περὶ μονῆς Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ νεώτερα, Ἑλληνικά 25 (1972), 298–313; see also "Précisions sur le fondateur de Saint Luc," *CahArch* 22 (1972), 87–88. Stikas returned to the question two years later: Ὁ κτίτωρ τοῦ καθολικοῦ τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ (Athens, 1974); more recently D. Pallas wrote "Zur Topographie und Chronologie von Hosios Lukas: Eine kritische Übersicht," *BZ* 78 (1985), 94–107.

[18] L. Bouras, Ὁ γλυπτὸς διάκοσμος τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Παναγίας στὸ μοναστῆρι τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ (Athens, 1980); and T. Chatzidakis-Bacharas, *Les peintures murales de Hosios Loukas. Les chapelles occidentales* (Athens, 1982). General notice in J. Koder and F. Hild, *Tabula Imperii Byzantini, I. Hellas und Thessalien* (Vienna, 1976), 205–6.

[19] Professors Paul Mylonas and Nano Chatzidakis were kind enough to present our seminar with their important findings concerning the architectural history and the iconography program of Hosios Loukas. Mylonas' findings have since been published: Δομικὴ ἔρευνα στὸ ἐκκλησιαστικὸ συγκρότημα τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ Φωκίδος, Ἀρχαιολογία 36 (September 1990), 6–30. Even more recent is C. Connor, *Art and Miracles in Medieval Byzantium: The Crypt at Hosios Loukas and Its Frescoes* (Princeton, 1991).

[20] One exception: C. Connor squeezes all construction, decoration, and marble revetments into the 10th century, in spite of the fact that there is a mosaic portrait of St. Nikon, who died in 997. But this hardly fits with a 10th-century date.

For his part, Mylonas in his recent publication (cf. note 19 above) has studied in detail the architectural remains of the churches of Hosios Loukas and proposed four major stages in their construction. (a) The church of St. Barbara, which had been founded before St. Luke's death, (b) was considerably enlarged later; he supposes that this occurred toward the end of the tenth century and assumes that it was then rededicated to the Virgin, becoming thus the actual church of the Panagia. (c) Above the tomb of St. Luke a cruciform two-storey martyrium was initially built, (d) and was later replaced by (and incorporated into) the actual katholikon. Mylonas also assumes that the new church of the Virgin is the one depicted in the hands of Philotheos. Consequently he dates the inauguration of the new church of the Panagia in 1011 and that of the katholikon under Constantine Monomachos, as this is attested by the fifteenth-century traveler Cyriacus of Ancona.

As far as this study is concerned, the two theories diverge mainly as to which church is the one depicted in the hands of Philotheos. I think that one can safely accept that abbot Philotheos performed the translation of the saint's relics on a third of May, most probably in 1011. On that day a new church was inaugurated in the monastery, the katholikon (Chatzidakis) or the new church of St. Barbara/the Virgin (Mylonas). Of the two hypotheses, the first appears closer to reality: in the saint's canticle studied by Chatzidakis (cf. notes 16 and 17 above), it is clearly stated that his new, monumental tomb was placed from the very beginning inside a church dedicated to the saint himself (ναῷ . . . ἐν καινῷ, ὃν ἤγειρεν εἰς σὸν ὄνομα . . .), that is, inside the katholikon which is effectively dedicated to St. Luke.

Let us now return to the frescoes[21] in the crypt's southeastern groin vault, which have to be examined in conjunction with the frescoes of the northeastern groin vault. Both vaults are divided into four; in each quarter there is one portrait. In the northeastern vault we find four saints (all are called ὁ ἅγιος in the accompanying inscriptions): St. Luke (the founder of the monastery), St. Athanasios of Alexandria, St. Theodosios the *koinobiarches* (4th century), and St. Philotheos the Confessor (10th century). In the southeastern vault are the four abbots of Hosios Loukas mentioned above; they have the same names and are in the same order as the saints of the northeastern vault. Each portrait is accompanied by an inscription calling the person depicted ὅσιος πατήρ (holy father) and not ἅγιος (saint): ὁ ὅσιος πατὴρ ἡμῶν Λουκᾶς, ὁ ὅσιος πατὴρ ἡμῶν Ἀθανάσιος, ὁ ὅσιος πατὴρ ἡμῶν Θεοδόσιος, ὁ ὅσιος πατὴρ ἡμῶν Φιλόθεος. The expression ὁ ὅσιος πατήρ shows that the persons depicted were abbots of the monastery.

The "holy father" Luke has been identified by Chatzidakis with the founder of the monastery. Yet this identification presents a problem: the founder is always represented with a black (or brown) beard, while this abbot's beard is white. Moreover, St. Luke the founder is always called "the saint" (ὁ ἅγιος), while the monk represented here is called ὁ ὅσιος πατὴρ ἡμῶν, like the other abbots. Connor (pp. 51–52) rejected Chatzidakis' point of view and proposed the identification of this portrait with St. Luke the Stylite (d. 979). But this in turn seems quite unlikely: St. Luke the Stylite would obviously be out of context in this position, in the midst of the abbots of Hosios Loukas.

I believe that the person depicted here is an early abbot of Hosios Loukas, who was also named Luke but who was not the founder. He is not an unknown person: in a village that used to be a dependency of St. Luke in Euboea, near Aliveri, there is an inscription commemorating the construction of a church in 1014, "nine years" (θ' ἔτη) after the death of "our holy father Luke" (τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Λουκᾶ).[22] This is an abbot Luke who died in 1005, as opposed to the founder, who had been deceased since 953. Here again he is called ὁ ὅσιος πατὴρ ἡμῶν, as he is in the groin vault. The way in which he is mentioned allows one to think that he was remembered, at least in Euboea of 1014, as an important abbot.

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[21] My remarks are largely based on what has already been written by Chatzidakis (who also provides the relevant iconographic material) and by Connor, *Hosios Loukas*, 48 ff.

[22] A. Orlandos, Τὸ παρὰ τὸ Ἀλιβέρι μετόχιον τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ Φωκίδος, Ἀρχ.Βυζ.Μνημ.Ἑλλ. 7 (1951), 141–43; cf. Chatzidakis, "A propos de la date," 129 note 16. There is an improved edition of this inscription by N. Belenis: "Επιλεγόμενα σε επιγραφές του μετοχίου του Οσίου Λουκά Εύβοιας," in Αρμός. Τιμητικός τόμος στον καθηγητή Ν. Κ. Μουτσόπουλο (Thessaloniki, 1990), 353–61.

Philotheos is undoubtedly the founder of the church that he is depicted as offering to St. Luke and which is most probably the katholikon. The black-haired Athanasios, also an abbot, is not known to me from other sources.[23] The white-haired ὅσιος Theodosios must have been, I believe, the same person as the "holy" abbot of Steirion, Theodosios Leobachos, who lived around 1048 and whom we identified with Theodore/Theodosios of the funerary inscription.

As mentioned above, three of the abbots of the southeastern groin vault are also depicted on a fresco at the entrance of the crypt. In the center of the entrance barrel vault, we have Christ blessing. On one side, we have a monk who is also blessing and holds a scroll: he has been identified with the founder of the monastery. On the other side, there is a group of monks, and, in the front row, three abbots turned toward Christ. The first can easily be identified with Theodosios of the groin vault: he has both hands raised in supplication. The second, Athanasios of the groin vault, has only his right hand raised. The third, Philotheos, does not raise his hands. If the order in which they are represented is chronological, Athanasios should be placed sometime between 1011 (abbot Philotheos) and 1048 (abbot Theodosios). But this is hypothetical.

It is obvious that these abbots, who are persistently represented in the frescoes, must also have been benefactors of the monastery. We have seen that Philotheos could lay such a claim as the founder of the katholikon. We may assume that the others contributed toward other monuments. Theodosios could well be related to the luxurious mosaic decoration of the katholikon, a decoration that must have impressed everyone then, as it does now.

One cannot say with certainty who did what and why. But the hypothesis relating Theodosios to the mosaic decoration[24] may be supported by the following. (1) This was a very expensive enterprise, hardly imaginable without some support from the emperor. It is obvious that a former anthypatos, patrikios, vestes, and katepano was in a particularly good position to obtain such support. (2) According to a tradition that Cyriacus of Ancona read in a (now lost and unidentifiable) manuscript, the founder of the monastery of Hosios Loukas would have been Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–55). This could also concern the *decoration* of the katholikon, thanks to which Constantine IX may well have gained the name of *ktētor.*[25] If so, this must have occurred in the early years of his reign, when he, together with his co-empresses Zoe and Theodora, distributed funds generously, especially to religious foundations. This was the time when Theodosios Leobachos was the abbot of Hosios Loukas. By contrast, Constantine IX's last years were characterized by extreme stinginess.[26]

Quite apart from the works that Theodosios may have had executed in the monastery, it may be considered as certain that the crypt frescoes must have been made after his death, that is, certainly after 1048, but not much later, for art historians date them close to the mosaics. The execution of these former abbots' portraits could have been the work of the abbot Gregory, who had the marble revetment made, obviously soon after the mosaics were finished.[27] These former abbots were probably buried in the crypt, where three tombs still exist, and others may have existed in the past. This is where I would expect to find the arcosolium on which the inscription of Theodore/Theodosios may have initially been placed.[28]

The above remarks, if accepted, invite a new reading of the frescoes of the crypt's two groin vaults. On the southeast vault we have the pictures of the four higoumenoi of the first half of the eleventh century, who presumably carried out important works in the monastery and gave it the grandiose appearance that it retains: Luke (d. 1005), Philotheos (fl. 1011), Athanasios and Theodosios

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[23] Connor, *Hosios Loukas*, 52, identified this monk as St. Athanasios the Athonite, the founder of the Great Lavra, who would have been represented there as an *hosios* well before his death (1001 or later). This is most unlikely.

[24] Chatzidakis-Bacharas, *Les peintures murales*, 184–88, has already expressed the idea that the abbot Leobachos may have financed the decoration of the katholikon and thus imposed the representations of his patron saint, Theodore. The hypothesis seems reasonable and is not weakened by the new reading of the name on the confraternity typikon (Theodosios and not Theodore) because, as we have seen, St. Theodore was his patron saint from the time when he was a layman. Connor has also attributed the mosaic decoration to the abbot Leobachos.

[25] Stikas has defended the idea that the katholikon was founded by Constantine Monomachos, but I think that the question is seen from a more realistic perspective by Chatzidakis, Ἑλληνικά 25 (1972), 301–9.

[26] Michael Attaleiates, Bonn ed., 50–51.

[27] Chatzidakis, "A propos de la date," 141. It is notable that parts of the walls of the crypt are decorated with imitation marble ornament, as if the sponsor was trying to follow the example set by the katholikon above.

[28] It should be stressed though that the inscription, because of its dimensions, does not belong to any of the existing tombs.

(fl. 1048). On the northeast vault we have the saints whose names the four higoumenoi took when they became monks and who could be considered as their spiritual protectors and sources of inspiration.

The whole crypt thus acquires a new meaning. When the relics of the founder were brought to the main floor to make them more accessible to the faithful, the crypt kept its mortuary character with emphasis on the recent internal history of the monastery. It was dedicated to some great reforming higoumenoi of the recent past—the higoumenoi whose names were associated with the new and luxurious Hosios Loukas.

IV. The Main Phases of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas

In what follows I will try to present a scenario with some of the phases that the monastery of Hosios Loukas may have gone through in the first century of its existence. The basic source will be the Life of St. Luke, and references to the latest edition of this text are provided in square brackets.[29]

During the second half of the ninth century, mainland Greece had begun recovering from the Slavic onslaught. New churches were founded by local patrons, as we know from the surviving inscriptions of St. John Mangoutis in Athens (871), St. Gregory in Thebes (871/2), and Skripou in Orchomenos (873/75).[30] Coins began circulating during the reign of Emperor Theophilos (829–842); the distribution of finds, though, is very unequal: many in Corinth, fewer in Athens, and very few in Thebes (which, it must be said in fairness, has never been properly excavated in this respect). In the following centuries, numismatic circulation would improve, but the distribution of the finds followed the same pattern.[31]

St. Luke's family were refugees from Aigina; they had abandoned their island out of fear of the Arabs[32] and had moved to the northern shore of the Gulf of Corinth in the second half of the ninth century [160]. They settled at Kastorion, where they became wealthy shepherds. Then came friction with the local population, who wanted to drive them away as immigrants without any property (ἐπήλυδας καὶ παροίκους[33]), and Constantinople had to intervene: in accordance with an imperial order, the land was divided between the indigenous population and the newcomers [161]. Thanks to this intervention by the administration, the refugees settled permanently and became farmers [164].

In the early tenth century, Boeotia and Phokis seem once again to be threatened from the north. The passes to Thessaly are closely controlled by soldiers [165–66], while by contrast the movement of men toward the south and west is frequent and easy [166–67, 174, 180]. The region is crossed by travelers going to Rome and Athens [171, 174]. Even remote places, like Mount Ioannitzi, where Luke started his life as a hermit, were close to cenobitic monasteries [171] and permitted contacts with local shipowners [180].

In 918 the region became the object of raids by Tsar Symeon: not only looting and taking of prisoners, but also a deliberate effort at conquest by claiming from the populations the payment of taxes [ὑποφόρους ποιούμενος, 182]. Many inhabitants fled, some to the islands of the Gulf of Corinth,[34] others to the fortified cities, to Euboea, or to the Peloponnese. St. Luke went to Corinth, then to the region of Patras; once he tried to return home, but was arrested and whipped. The authorities would certainly not allow any demographic reinforcement of a region under the control of the Bulgars, who then demanded that Byzantium recognize them as masters of all the Balkan peninsula.[35]

The Bulgarian invasion is also mentioned in the

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[29] D. Sofianos, Ὅσιος Λουκᾶς. Ὁ βίος τοῦ ὁσίου Λουκᾶ τοῦ Στειριώτη (Athens, 1989). A similar, more detailed study with diverging but interesting results has been undertaken by Connor.

[30] A. Xyngopoulos, Εὑρετήριον τῶν μνημείων τῆς Ἑλλάδος A. Εὑρετήριον τῶν Μεσαιωνικῶν μνημείων. I. Ἀθηνῶν, fasc. 2 (Athens, 1929), 85–87; G. A. Sotiriou, Ὁ ἐν Θήβαις βυζαντινὸς ναὸς Γρηγορίου τοῦ Θεολόγου, Ἀρχ.Ἐφ. (1924), 1–26: M. Sotiriou, Ὁ ναὸς τῆς Σκριποῦς τῆς Βοιωτίας, Ἀρχ.Ἐφ. (1931), 119–57.

[31] My knowledge of the circulation of coinage in the region is based on a communication of Mrs. Vasso Pennas.

[32] The Arab attacks on Aigina that forced the population to abandon the island are described in the Life of St. Luke, the Life of St. Athanasia (ed. Lydia Carras, in *Maistor* [Canberra, 1984], 212), and the Life of St. Theodora of Thessaloniki (ed. Arsenij, [Jurjev, 1899], 2–4).

[33] In this context, the word πάροικος is used with its primary meaning of a person who, lacking property, lives on someone else's land.

[34] Medieval remains have been found on some islands in the Gulf of Corinth and have been interpreted as remnants of populations who tried to flee the Slavs in the 6th-7th century: S. Hood, "Isles of Refuge in the Early Byzantine Period," *BSA* 65 (1970), 37–45. But this date and interpretation have been contested by Timothy Gregory.

[35] Nicholas I, *Letters*, no. 27, line 73.

Chronicle of Galaxidi[36] as well as in two scholia of Arethas of Caesarea, which inform us that even the city of Thebes was threatened (without saying whether it ever actually fell to the Bulgars).[37] The impression remains that the Bulgarian army invaded every year and collected taxes without systematically trying to besiege the cities.[38] Be that as it may, St. Luke stayed in the Peloponnese for approximately ten years. Things improved only after the death of Symeon and the conclusion of a treaty with his successor, Peter. In 928 the refugees returned to what was left of their homes.

Fifteen years later there was a new invasion, this time by the Hungarians. Once again the peasants, Luke with them, were forced to abandon their homes and take refuge on an island in the Gulf of Corinth, called (then and now) Ampelon [195–96]. According to the Life of St. Luke, the Hungarian invasion lasted three years. In fact we know from the chronicles that the Hungarians attacked Macedonia and Thrace in 943, and were rapidly pushed back.[39] But their attacks on Greece (in which the Constantinopolitan chroniclers show no interest) continued. The strategos of Thessaloniki, Katakalon, who held this position by May 942,[40] was killed while fighting them in 945, as we learn from an anonymous epigram.[41] The information from the Life is thus confirmed by independent sources, including, I believe, the Chronicle of Galaxidi, which gives a lively—and not necessarily exaggerated—image of how frightful the Hungarian invasions of the tenth century may have been.[42]

After the invasions came the rebuilding. But the general level of life undoubtedly declined. The monastery of Hosios Loukas is the only known church in mainland Greece that seems to have been founded in the tenth century. Hellas is seen by the Constantinopolitans as an underdeveloped part of the empire, as is suggested by the following epigram: "To someone who went to Hellas and became rustic: Having seen Greece, not the land of the barbarians, you have become barbarized in your speech as well as your manners."[43]

The main city in the neighborhood of Hosios Loukas, Thebes, had a structured society [190, 203], and received imperial officials [204]. The city was walled, but in times of peace could easily be entered, even during the night [191, 192]. There was at least one monastery outside the walls [190, 192, 202] as well as at least one public bath [192]. It was the seat of the strategos of Hellas [200]; but this official left his family behind in Constantinople, suggesting that the quality of life in Thebes was not entirely acceptable. Its inhabitants were mostly farmers.[44] In spite of this, the strategos could afford to finance the building of the new church of St. Barbara (which eventually became the present-day church of the Virgin at Hosios Loukas): he provided workers as well as cash [μετὰ τῆς χειρὸς καὶ τὴν δαπάνην, 202].

The second city of the region was Athens, known for the great church of the Virgin in the Parthenon; it also had at least one monastery, in which the young Luke assumed monastic garb. The city served as a stopover for those traveling from Rome to Jerusalem: they sailed to the north shore of the Gulf of Corinth, then crossed Phokis and Boeotia to reach the port of Athens [166–67]. We know that in the early tenth century Athens underwent a period of social upheaval.[45]

Corinth, the capital of the theme of Peloponnese, is mentioned more often than Athens and seems to be the largest and most important city in the region. Not only did it have at least one primary school [182], but it also hosted a certain Theophylaktos, a famous teacher of classical literature [194]—a high-level professor, like those who were then attested almost exclusively in Constantinople.[46] It was an important port [188–90]. The economic domination of Corinth over the whole region is also attested by the numismatic finds mentioned above.

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[36] C. Sathas, Χρονικὸν ἀνέκδοτον Γαλαξειδίου (Athens, 1865; repr. 1914), 200–202; more recent editions by G. Valettas (Athens, 1944), and E. Anagnostakis (Athens, 1985). It has been suggested that this chronicle refers to Samuel's invasion of Greece (Sathas, Anagnostakis, and especially P. Tivčev, "Nouvelles données sur les guerres des Bulgares contre Byzance au temps de tsar Samuel," *Byzantinobulgarica* 3 [1969], 37–45). See also D. Krabartogiannos, Ἀπόψεις περὶ τῆς ἐπιδρομῆς τῶν Βουλγάρων στὴν Ἑλλάδα τὸν 10ο αἰώνα καὶ τὸ δαλματικὸ τοπωνύμιο Σάλωνα, Βυζαντινὸς Δόμος 1 (1987), 213–20. But the point of view of Bees (see note 37 below), which is supported by the Life of St. Luke, is far more convincing.

[37] N. Bees, Αἱ ἐπιδρομαὶ τῶν Βουλγάρων ὑπὸ τὸν τζάρον Συμεὼν καὶ τὰ σχετικὰ σχόλια τοῦ Ἀρέθα Καισαρείας, Ἑλληνικά 1 (1928), 337–70. The question was reexamined by J. Rosser, "A Tenth Century Bulgar Attack on 'The Great Isthmus Corridor' of Central Greece," *17th International Byzantine Congress*, Abstracts of Short Papers (Washington, D.C., 1986), 299.

[38] See the recent study by T. Bazaiou-Barabas, Σημείωμα γιὰ τὴν ἐπιδρομὴ τοῦ τσάρου Συμεὼν κατὰ τῆς κυρίως Ἑλλάδας (ἀρχὲς 10ου αἰώνα), Σύμμεικτα 8 (1989), 383–97.

[39] Theophanes Continuatus, Bonn ed., 430.

[40] *Actes du Protaton*, ed. D. Papachryssanthou (Paris, 1975), no. 4, line 13; cf. no. 6.

[41] Νέος Ἑλλ. 16 (1922), 53–54 (the epigram was written after the deposition of the Lakapenoi: 27 January 945).

[42] Sathas, Χρονικόν, 203. In this chronicle, the Hungarians are not mentioned by name; the invaders are called πειράταις, literally "pirates," but the author uses the word for any invader, including the Bulgars. It has also been proposed that these barbarian invaders be identified with the Ouzes of 1064 (Anagnostakis, 78–79)

[43] PG 106, col. 922: Εἴς τινα κατελθόντα εἰς Ἑλλάδα καὶ ἀγροικισθέντα: Οὐ βαρβάρων γῆν, ἀλλ'ἰδὼν τὴν Ἑλλάδα, ἐβαρβαρώθης καὶ λόγον καὶ τὸν τρόπον.

[44] Cf. Koder and Hild, *Hellas*, 269–71.

[45] Cf. ibid., 126–29.

The places where St. Luke chose to stay, on the coast or near the coast of Boeotia and Phokis, appear to be true crossroads: many ships as well as many travelers are mentioned [197]. Some ships are local, others come directly from Italy [196]. It is obvious that the Via Egnatia from Durazzo to Thessaloniki was then closed and that ships avoided sailing around the Peloponnese for fear of the Arabs of Crete. Travelers from Corinth to the north of Greece often crossed Boeotia [182, 185–87, 193]. The monks had frequent contacts with Thebes [200, 201]; from there one could go to Thessaloniki via (Bralos and) Larissa [201, 203]. When St. Luke moved more to the west, close to the village of Steiri [197], he realized that there again he was surrounded by several villages [τὰς κύκλῳ κώμας, 206; ἐν γειτόνων χωρῖται, 208]; moreover, he was close to the plain of Amphissa, which received many travelers going to Italy [208] or coming from Italy via Naupaktos.[47]

The monastery of Hosios Loukas was thus founded in a region recovering after a period of destruction, and which was then an important passageway between the Peloponnese and mainland Greece, between east and west.[48] One may assume that, like so many other monasteries, Hosios Loukas must have served not only as a center for miraculous healings but also as a hostel for travelers—and this from its very beginning: according to the Life of St. Luke, a hostel was one of the first buildings in this monastic complex [209: τῶν ἐπιξενουμένων ὑποδοχήν].

While the saint was still alive, the church of St. Barbara had been built thanks to the help of a strategos of Hellas named Krenites [202]. The saint himself was very much inspired by modesty: he had asked to be buried in the simplest possible way at the very spot on which he would die; and in fact he was buried in the ground of his cell. But soon things started changing, as people thought of exploiting a relic reputed for its miracles. A monk from Paphlagonia named Kosmas volunteered his "know-how": the tomb of the saint was elevated above the level of the soil and decorated with slabs (i.e., it became a sarcophagus, like those that still exist in the crypt at Hosios Loukas), and was protected with a railing, in such a way that it could be touched only by those who had shown the necessary piety (and obtained the necessary permission) [208]. The saint's hermitage was thus becoming a *proskynēma.* The church of St. Barbara was finished and decorated, the monastic cells and a hostel were built, as well as a second church (εὐκτήριον) in the form of a cross, situated above the saint's tomb [209]: this was a kind of martyrium. And the miracles, mainly healings, began to proliferate for the benefit of the inhabitants of a large region: Attica, Boeotia, Phthiotis, Phokis, Euboea, the islands. A few years after the saint's death, his monastery had become a major center of piety in the region. Yet it appears to have been an institution of moderate size and ambitions.

At this point the Life of St. Luke ends, and we have no further information concerning the rest of the tenth century. But in the eleventh, probably starting with the higoumenate of Luke II (d. 1005), important construction work was undertaken in the monastery: additions to the church of the Virgin (i.e., St. Barbara), construction of the new katholikon in the place of the church/martyrium, installation of a new sarcophagus for the saint in a place easily accessible to pilgrims, the translation of the relics, the outstanding decoration of the new katholikon, which made Hosios Loukas an extraordinary monastic complex, comparable to any monument of the Byzantine capital. The translation of the relics constituted a new inauguration of the monastery; thus its anniversary (3 May) became the main feast day (πανήγυρις) of the year, more important than the anniversary of St. Luke's death, which, most inconveniently, fell in the middle of winter (7 February).

This series of reconstructions could have been provoked by a man-made catastrophe, such as the Bulgarian invasion of 996/7, or by a natural phenomenon, such as a landslide.[49] But it may also simply reflect a new mentality prevailing during this time. The eleventh century was a period of peace and security for the empire, which was on the verge of adopting new, more open social and economic structures. It was a period of peace and security for mainland Greece as well, as is clearly seen in the Life of St. Meletios of Myoupolis.[50] Important building activity was conducted in various locations. The monastery of Hosios Loukas, particularly active and obviously with considerable funds at its disposal, was a major healing center tending toward expansion: for example, in 1014, a church of the healing saints Kosmas and Damian was built at the metochion of the monastery near Aliveri in Euboea. At approximately the same time, another metochion of the monastery seems to have been founded in the village of Politiki in Euboea.[51] The healing saints also occupy a distinguished position in the mosaic decoration. It is clear that the abbots of Hosios Loukas were able to think big and single-mindedly.

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[46] Such teachers were rare outside the capital in the 10th century: see P. Lemerle, "Elèves et professeurs à Constantinople au Xe siècle," *CRAI* 1969, 576–87; idem, *Le premier humanisme byzantin* (Paris, 1971), 242–66. Cf. also A. Markopoulos, Ἡ ὀργάνωση τοῦ σχολείου, Ἡ καθημερινὴ ζωὴ στὸ Βυζάντιο (Athens, 1989), 325–33.

[47] G. Rossi-Taibbi, *Vita di San Elia il Giovane* (Palermo, 1962), 108, 110, 116.

[48] The routes and ports of the region are described by Koder and Hild, *Hellas*, 97–98 and 101–4 on the basis of later sources, without taking into consideration the Life of St. Luke. It is interesting to note that the image given above on the basis of the Life differs considerably from that in Koder and Hild, obviously because the general situation of the region changed radically after the Arabs were driven from Crete and Bulgaria was conquered by Basil II: the Via Egnatia as well as the maritime route around the Peloponnese were then reopened.

At the same time a new local cult was being promoted with the tombs and frescoes of the crypt honoring the abbots Luke, Philotheos, Athanasios, and Theodosios, the new founders of the monastery.[52] Because of their efforts and thanks to the help of pilgrims, the local aristocracy, and Constantinople, the initially modest hermitage of the saint had become a grand, wealthy, and influential center of pilgrimage, the pride of southern mainland Greece, a source of inspiration, and proof that the difficulties of the past had disappeared for good and that a new, more sophisticated, era was dawning.

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[49] The threat of the barbarians is mentioned in the offices written for the translation of the relics in or shortly after 1011: τὰ θράση θραῦσον τῶν πολεμούντων ἡμᾶς, τὰς σκυθικὰς χαλίνωσον ἐπιδρομὰς ταῖς προστασίαις σου and τοὺς βαρείς λύκους, ῥάβδῳ τῆς πρεσβείας σου, ἀποδιώκων αὐτῆς τοὺς πολεμοῦντας ἡμᾶς (Kremos, Φωκικά, I, 117, 129). On the other hand, the hypothesis of a landslide is based on the configuration of the monastery's land, which is now secured with impressive retaining walls.

[50] V. G. Vasil'evskij, in *Pravoslavnij Palestinskij Sbornik* 6.2 (1886), 1–69.

[51] This hypothesis was presented by Ch. Bouras, Περὶ τὴν χρονολόγηση τῆς Περιβλέπτου στὰ Πολιτικὰ Εὐβοίας, 10ο Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινῆς καὶ Μεταβυζαντινῆς Ἀρχαιολογίας καὶ Τέχνης (Athens, 1990), 52–53.

[52] This is not the only case in which new founders received respect equal to that of the initial founder of a monastery; see *Actes de Docheiariou*, 7–11.

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IV

LE BATEAU DE CHILANDAR

L'empereur Alexis III Ange Comnène octroya à Chilandar ses premiers privilèges. Parmi eux, il y a le chrysobulle (juin 1199) permettant au monastère de posséder un bateau (embarcation de 1000 modioi) exempt de tout impôt pour servir ses besoins à l'intérieur du littoral qui allait des embouchures de l'Hebros jusqu'à l'ouest de Thessalonique.

La fondation du nouveau Chilandar à l'extrême fin du XIIe siècle par deux nobles Serbes fut possible grâce à l'appui de l'empereur de Constantinople Alexis III Ange Comnène qui, suivant la recommandation de la communauté athonite, octroya au monastère ses premiers terrains et ses premiers privilèges. Parmi ces premiers privilèges, il y a le chrysobulle permettant à Chilandar de posséder un bateau exempt de tout impôt pour servir ses besoins.

La possession de bateaux par les monastères est une vieille histoire bien connue. Déjà au Xe siècle, Athanase de Lavra avait obtenu de l'empereur Basile II l'exemption fiscale d'un bateau de 6000 modioi pour les besoins de son couvent. Peu après, en 984, Athanase fit don de ce chrysobulle et de l'exemption qui y était mentionnée à Jean l'Ibère, le fondateur et higomène de nouveau couvent d'Iviron.[1] Il est intéressant de noter que le privilège passa d'un particulier à un autre avec le simple transfert du document original, comme si c'était un simple bien meuble dont le propriétaire pouvait disposer comme il l'entendait.

Il faut ajouter ici que ce bateau de Lavra–Iviron était le plus grand de ceux que des monastères athonites aient jamais possédé. Aussi, on peut déduire que Lavra possédait alors, très probablement, un autre bateau, ce qui lui permettait de se défaire avec une certaine facilité du privilège de Basile II. Un siècle plus tard, Lavra possède à nouveau 6000 modioi de bateau exempt de toute taxe.[2] Autrement dit, la flotte de Lavra était probablement considérable et jouissait de prvilèges en partie ou dans sa totalité. Mais ceci se passait à une époque où Lavra était le seul grand koinobion sur le Mont Athos, et Iviron le second qui venait d'être fondé. Isolés comme ils étaient au milieu du désert athonite, loin de leurs propriétés en Macécedoine orientale et dans les îles, ces couvents avaient naturellement besoin d'utiliser un transport martime bon marché pour s'approvisionner – aussi pour écouler leurs surplus agricoles dans des conditions rapportant potentiellement plus que l'attente de l'intermédiaire au lieu de production. Mais le nombre des bateaux monastiques privilégiés étant encore petit, l'état se montrait généreux envers les moines et leurs demandes.

Le système cénobitique se développa, des nombreux koinobia ont été fondés à des endroits déserts, à l'Athos et ailleurs, et des nouvelles exemptions de bateaux ont été

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[1] Actes d'Iviron, I, éd J. Lefort, N. Oikonomidès, D. Papachryssanthou, H. Métrévéli, Paris 1985, no. 6.
[2] Actes de Lavra I, éd. P. Lemerle, N. Svoronos, A. Guillou, D. Papachryssanthou, Paris 1970, no. 55.

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accordées à des monastères. Les archives de Patmos nous permettent de voir mieux dans l'affaire.

Le fondateur du couvent, Saint Christodule, a obtenu de l'empereur Alexis Ier Comnène la cession de la totalité de l'île de Patmos avec exemption complète en échange de certaines propriétés qu'il avait a Kos. Il garda cependant quelques propriétés de rapport en dehors de son île.[3] En même temps (avril 1088), il obtint de l'empereur un autre chrysobulle[4] lui accordant l'exemption fiscale pour un bateau de 500 modioi qui sera construit par les moines et qui servira leurs besoins en se rendant partout dans l'empire – sauf la région de Constantinople, dont l'accès était réglementé de façon particulière.[5] Cinq années plus tard, nous savons que le monastère possédait quatre bateaux (dont un seul jouissait de l'exemption fiscale) qu'il avait confiés à des capitaines pour exploitation économique.[6]

Le nombre de bateaux privilégiés de Patmos augmenta avec le temps; en octobre 1195 le monastère avait le droit d'exempter un ou plusieurs bateaux d'une capacité totale de 1500 modioi, qui visiteraient librement tout l'empire et, une fois par an, le port de Constantinople lui-même. Au cours d'un siècle, le privilège de Patmos avait plus que triplé.

Il semblerait que c'était là un problème plus général, et l'état a dû prendre des mesures. A un moment que nous ignorons et qui se situe entre juin 1196 et novembre 1197, Alexis III Ange décréta l'annulation de toute exemption fiscale accordée à des bateaux, „parce que ces privilèges sont devenus trop nombreux et portent préjudice au fisc."[7] Cette mesure radicale n'enlevait pas aux monastères le droit de posséder des bateaux et de les exploiter comme ils l'entendaient, il les obligeait seulement de payer pour les activités de ces bateaux les mêmes taxes et impôts que tout le monde.

Or, Byzance était entre temps passée à une époque où le privilège était devenu chose normale pour certaines catégories de personnes physiques ou morales: ce qui a commencé comme une exception, avait fini par devenir partie integrante du système fiscal, portant préjudice plus aux fonctionnaires qu'au fisc à proprement parler. Ainsi les abolitions de privilèges générales ne resistaient pas aux pressions, comme le montre de façon manifeste le document de Patmos.

En effet, en novembre 1197 Alexis III Ange fit une exception à la mesure ci-dessus pour favoriser le couvent de Patmos. Il confirme les privilèges accordés par ses prédécesseurs en matière d'exemptions de bateaux et accorda l'exemption complète d'un autre bateau de 500 modioi. Ainsi le couvent se retrouvait maintenant avec l'exemption fiscale de bateaux d'une capacité totale de 2000 modioi. Malgré la législation contraire et l'ambiance qu'elle devait créer, les privilèges ne cessaient d'augmenter, pour certains au moins.

Il est important de souligner deux détails dans le chrysobulle d'Alexis III pour illustrer la lutte sourde qui opposait à l'époque et à l'intérieur de la cour de Constantinople les fonctionnaires aux détenteurs de privilèges et, en dernier ressort, à l'empereur:

1. Le chrysobulle contient une phrase écrite régulièrement par le scribe mais ensuite rayée d'un trait à l'encre rouge, donc rayée par l'empereur ou par son secrétaire personnel. Cette phrase précisait que "tous les droits du fisc [que le monastère ne paiera pas] seront comptés à l'actif de ceux qui sont chargés de leur perception (fonctionnaires, fermiers d'impôts ou auters) grâce à des reçus confirmés que le monastère délivrera."[8] C'est

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[3] Byzantina Eggrapha Patmou I, *Autokratorika*, éd E. Branouse, Athènes 1980, no. 6.

[4] Byzantina Eggrapha Patmou I, no. 7.

[5] Cf. N. Oikonomides, *The Economic Region of Constantinople: from Directed Economy to Free Economy and the Role of the Italians*, Europa Medievale e Mondo Bizantino, ed. G. Arnaldi e G. Cavallo, Roma 1997 (Nuovi Studi Storici 40) 228.

[6] Byzantina Egrapha Patmou I, 47–49.

[7] Byzantina Eggrapha Patmou I, no. 11, l. 1–3, of. p. 105.

[8] Byzantina Eggrapha Patmou I, no. 11, 1. 27–30.

là le procédé bien connu de la *dochè* que Svoronos a étudié.[9] Etant donné que les fonctionnaires et les fermiers d'impôt étaient responsables de la collecte de certains revenus fiscaux dont le montant approximatif était connu d'avance, l'état leur reconnaissait le droit de soustraire de leurs obligations les sommes qui'ils ne pouvaient pas toucher parce que les contribuables potentiels étaient protégés par une exemption fiscale. Ainsi l'état assumait en entier le coût des exemptions qu'il accordait. C'était un procédé de bonne comptabilité et de bonne administration que les secrétaires de la chancellarie ont voulu introduire dans le chrysobulle; et ce procédé a été annulé par l'empereur lui-même, qui de cette façon simplifiait la vie des moines et surtout faisait porter le fardeau économique de cette exemption par ses propres fonctionnaires et non pas par le fisc. On peut imaginer que les fonctionnaires – et à plus forte raison les fermiers du fisc qui n'exerçaient pas leur charge pour perdre de l'argent, se faisaient compenser pour ces pertes en augmentant le fardeau fiscal des contribuables qui ne jouissaient pas d'exemption. Autrement dit, le fardeau d'un privilège, en l'occurrence celui de Patmos, qui, du point de vue économique, devait normalement constituer une perte nette pour le fisc, passait aux fonctionnaires et de ceux-là aux contribuables non-privilégiés. Ceci était possible dans un contexte de confusion administrative caractérisée par la rapacité de tous, comme ce fut le cas à la fin du XIIe s.

2. Au verso du chrysobulle se trouvent, comme d'habitude, les annotations *(katastroseis)* montrant que le document a été présenté aux bureaux compétents de l'administration centrale et y a été energistré. Ces notices datent de quelques jours après la livraison de l'acte au monastère – donc elles n'ont jamais été inspectées par la chancellerie impériale. Or, le fonctionnaire du bureau du grand comptable (logariastès) qui a enregistré l'acte, y a ajouté au verso la phrase "noter que l'exemption mentionnée dans l'acte ne sera pas valable en ce qui concerne les marchandises prohibées"[10] – c'est à dire les marchandises de grande valeur, comme la soie ou les metaux précieux, dont le commerce et la circulation étaient strictement contrôlés par l'état.

Deux conclusions s'imposent. Primo, les moines donnaient l'impression d'être capables d'ignorer l'interdit frappant le commerce spéculatif et de s'y adonner en utilisant leur bateau de petit tonange pour des marchandises de grande valeur; secondo, le fonctionnaire du bureau fiscal de Constantinople a senti le besion d'ajouter cette précision afin d'éviter d'éventuels excès de la part des moines, excès qui porteraient un tort autrement plus important aux agents du fisc. Étant donné que les moines demandaient l'exemption avec prétexte qu'ils voulaient répondre aux besoins de leur couvent, il ne leur était pas possible d'aller contester cette addition limitative qu'on a faite au verso de leur privilège.

Voici le contexte idéologique et administratif que les Nemanić ont rencontré au moment où ils ont voulu créer le nouveau Chilandar. L'état byzantin essayait de s'assurer la rentrée des taxes et impôts; d'un grand geste, qui resta sans suite réelle, il abolit les privilèges – en l'occurence les privilèges maritimes; mais en réalité, il continuait à en distribuer tout en faisant passer le fardeau du manque à gagner à ses propres fonctionnaires ou fermiers d'impôts, qui à leur tour le faisaient passer aux contribuables non-privilégiés. Un certain arbitraire regnait dans tous les aspects des rapports fiscaux avec comme seules victimes les petits propriétaires et les petits commerçants dont le fardeau fiscal, largement grâce aux contributions extraordinaires et aux corvées fournies en nature ou soumises à l'*adaeratio*, tendait à augmenter sans cesse, pour combler les lacunes que laissaient au budget de l'état et à la poche des collecteurs d'impôts, les divers privilèges accordés par les empereurs dans leur effort de s'assurer les services de certains ou l'appui moral de certains autres, comme les monastères.

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[9] N. Svoronos, *Notes à propos d'un procédé de techniques fiscales: la dochè*, Revue des Études Byzantines 24 (1966) 97–106.

[10] Byzantina Eggrapha Patmou I, no 11, 1. 52–53.

Saint Sabas obtint le droit de posséder un bateau exempt de tout impôt en juin 1199, à peine trois ans après l'interdiction de toute exemption maritime par ce même Alexis III.[11] Il s'agissait d'une embarcation de 1000 modioi qui devait appartenir au couvent et qui serait remplacée avec les mêmes privilèges si jamais elle coulait.

Elle aurait le droit de visiter le littoral du thème de Voléron, Strymon et Thessalonique et commercer (emporeuesthai) en tous biens comestibles et potables dont le monastère aura besoin, pour les lui apporter.

Le bateau de Chilandar ne sera pas soumis[12] au paiment d'un droit de mouillage quelconque où qu'il aille: il ne paiera pas s'il va à un port *(limeniatikon)*, non plus que s'il mouille près d'une échelle maritime *(skaliatikon)* ou s'il charge ou décharge tiré sur une plage *(ammiatikon)*.

Il ne sera pas soumis au droit à payer pour l'embarquement ou le débarquement des marchandises. C'est comme ça que je préfère comprendre les termes *embletikon, ekbletikon*, plutôt que d'y voir des corvées pour la charge et décharge des marchandises de l'état, *embletikion* étant peut-être traduit en latin au XIIe s. par l'expression *causa onerandi*.[13]

Il ne sera pas soumis à l'antinaulon, ce qui est une taxe frappant les matelots probablement comme une sorte d'*adaeratio* de l'obligation de transporter gratuitement des marchandises pour le compte de l'état.

Il ne sera même pas soumis à la dîme *(dekateia)* des marchandises comestibles ou potables qui'il transportera, "à condition que celles-ci soient considérées comme nécessaires pour le monastère" *(theoroumenon chreiodon te toiaute mone)*. Cette dernière clause me semble avoir une importance toute particulière: elle concerne le 10% prélevé sur toutes les marchandises lors de leur transport (l'équivalent du *kommerkion*) et plus particulièrement prélevé sur le vin *(dekateia oinaron)*. Ici il est dit que l'exemption sera valable pour les marchandises qui seraient jugées indispensables pour le couvent. Autrement dit, elle serait valable pour les marchandises destinées à la consommation des moines ou, nous pouvons le supposer, au surplus de leur production agriocle qui serait envoyé pour vente. Il n'y aurait pas d'exemption si les moines s'adonnaient au commerce spéculatif, ou s'ils étaient pris à commercer dans des matières qui n'ont rien à voir avec l'économie du couvent (par exemple en soie ou en épices).

La principale limitation du chrysobulle de Chilandar est géographique: le bateau jouirait de l'exemption s'il restait à l'intérieur du littoral voisinant du Mont Athos, à savoir du thème de Voléron, Strymon et Thessalonique, qui allait grosso modo des embouchures de l'Hebros jusqu'à l'ouest de Thessalonique. Les fonctionnaires de cette région sont les seuls à être expressément invités à respecter les termes du présent chrysobulle: ducs, stratèges, katépano, commerciaires et leurs remplaçants, ou toute autre personne chargée de la collecte de droits du fisc. Il est clair que l'exemption ne concerne que les représentants de l'administration provinciale.

C'est en effet la région dans laquelle se situaient la plupart des domaines athonites et où se faisait normalement l'approvisionnement des couvents. C'était aussi le région ouverte aux bateaux athonites dès 1045 par Constantin IX Monomaque.[14] Le bateau de Chilandar ne devait pas s'égarer hors de cette région, s'il voulait bénéficier du privilège. La différence avec les autres bateaux monastiques, qui allaient partout dans l'empire y compris Constantinople, est évidente. N'oublions pas qu'à cette même fin du XIIe s.

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[11] Actes de Chilandar, éd L. Petit et B. Korablev, Vizantijskij Vremennik 19 (1911), Priloženie 1, no. 5 = F. Dölger and P. Wirth, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches*, 2e éd., II, Munich 1995, no. 1652.

[12] H. Antoniadis-Bibicou, *Recherches sur les douanes à Byzance*, Paris 1963, 134–135.

[13] I. et P. Zepos, *Jus Graecoromanum* I, Athènes 1931, 475 (1198).

[14] Actes du Prôtaton, éd D. Papachryssanthou, Paris 1975, no. 8, 1. 66 et suiv.: entre Thessalonique et Ainos. Constantin IX ne parle point d'exemption fiscale et insiste que les bateaux monastiques serviront suelement à écouler les surplus et à acheter le nécessaire des moines, sans du tout s'adonner au commerce spéculatif.

Lavra pouvait traîner au tribunal les fonctionnaires de l'administration centrale au sujet de la dîme du vin exigée de ses bateaux et gagner le procès au grand dam de la hiérarchie Constantinopolitaine.[15]

Le privilège de Chilandar est limité, "provincial", malgré la noblesse reconnue des fondateurs et du respect dont ils jouissaient au palais. Mais les Némanides étaient des vrais zélotes, qui étaient venus à l'Athos pour créer un centre spirituel et y attirer l'intelligentsia serbe. Ils étaient des idéalistes et ont limité leurs exigeances à ce qui était vraiment nécessaire pour leur couvent. Leurs demandes étaient limitées et repondaient bien à l'esprit d'économies qui prévalait alors aux finances de l'état byzantin. Mais ceci n'a pas duré longtemps. Le couvent serbe grandira et finira à chercher les privilèges avec la même rapacité et le même succès que les couvents grecs. Les moines serbes, tout comme leurs collègues grecs, connaissaient bien la phrase evangélique "que l'homme ne vivra pas uniquement de pain." En 1199 ils étaient encore des apprentis, qui croyaient à toutes les bonnes choses promises par la vie monastique. Mais l'innocence initiale ne tarda pas de céder sa place au réalisme.

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Ο ΑΘΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΣΤΟΥΔΙΤΙΚΟ ΠΡΟΤΥΠΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΙΟΥ

Τα τελευταία χρόνια όσοι από μας είχαμε συχνές επαφές με το Άγιον Όρος παρακολουθήσαμε με κάποια έκπληξη —και ικανοποίηση— πως τα πιο πολλά μοναστήρια, σχεδόν όλα σήμερα, μετατράπηκαν από ιδιόρρυθμα σε κοινόβια. Κι όμως θυμάμαι πολύ ξεκάθαρα τον καιρό, γύρω στο '60, που 11 στα 20 ήταν ιδιόρρυθμα· και τον προηγούμενο Θεόφιλο Βατοπεδινό, από τα Βουρλά της Μικράς Ασίας νομίζω, που το 1965 μου έπλεκε το εγκώμιο της ιδιορρυθμίας και της ελευθερίας που προϋποθέτει σαν σύστημα. Κατά την γνώμη του, ο μοναχισμός έπρεπε να θεωρείται απόλυτα προσωπική απόφαση και εμπειρία· με κανένα τρόπο η έντονη αυτή αναζήτηση του θείου και της ησυχίας δεν έπρεπε να επηρεάζεται —ακόμη λιγότερο να κατευθύνεται— από μια άνωθεν επιβαλλόμενη πειθαρχία, από ένα αυστηρό ισοπεδωτικό κανονισμό, από ένα παντοδύναμο ηγούμενο. Και ένα από τα επιχειρήματα που έφερνε για να υποστηρίξει την άποψή του, ήταν να υπενθυμίσει πως το Άγιον Όρος ιδρύθηκε από ερημίτες, που ζούσαν και ασκούνταν όπως ο καθένας τους νόμιζε, χωρίς το παραμικρό τυπικό. Βέβαια, στην συζήτηση αυτή ο Βατοπεδινός μοναχός απέφευγε να αναφερθεί στο πόσο αργά εμφανίσθηκε το σύστημα των ιδιόρρυθμων μοναστηριών.

Η ιστορία του Αγίου Όρους την βυζαντινή εποχή μας είναι τώρα καλά γνωστή χάρη σε ένα μνημειώδες βιβλίο, η συγγραφέας του οποίου ποτέ δεν έβαλε πόδι στην χερσόνησο του Άθω. Η Διονυσία Παπαχρυσάνθου, φιλόλογος και ιστορικός, που έζησε τα πιο πολλά της χρόνια στο Παρίσι, δημοσίευσε στη σειρά Archives de l'Athos το βυζαντινό αρχείο του Πρωτάτου, που είχε φωτογραφήσει το 1918 ο G. Millet[1]. Ως εισαγωγή στην έκδοση αυτή συνέγραψε την ιστορία του Αγίου Όρους κατά τους πρώτους αιώνες της ύπαρξής του, 9ο και 10ο, και μελέτησε σε βάθος τους αγιορειτικούς θεσμούς ως τον 16ο αι.: ένα έργο μνημειώδες, που βασίζεται σε κάθε είδους δημοσιευμένες και αδημοσίευτες πηγές, που μεταφράσθηκε, ενημερωμένο, στα Ελληνικά από το ΜΙΕΤ, και που μας επιτρέπει να μιλούμε για την ιστορία του Αγίου Όρους απαλλαγμένοι από την σύγχυση που προκαλούσαν διάφοροι ευσεβείς ή πατριωτικοί μύθοι[2].

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[1] *Actes du Prôtaton*, éd. Denise Papachryssanthou, Paris 1975.

[2] Διονυσίας Παπαχρυσάνθου, *Ο αθωνικός μοναχισμός. Αρχές και οργάνωση*, Αθήνα 1992 (στη συνέχεια αναφέρεται ως *Αθ. Μον.*).

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Διαβάζοντας το βιβλίο αυτό μου γεννήθηκαν οι σκέψεις που θα παρουσιάσω· διαβάζοντας το βιβλίο αυτό και προετοιμάζοντας ένα σεμινάριο στο Πανεπιστήμιο της Αθήνας με θέμα την μονή Στουδίου. Από τον 9ο αι. η μονή αυτή είχε γίνει το κέντρο αναμόρφωσης του βυζαντινού μοναχισμού προς την κατεύθυνση του κοινοβιακού συστήματος, το οποίο ο Θεόδωρος Στουδίτης θεωρούσε απερίφραστα ως ανώτερο του αναχωρητικού. Οι κανονισμοί που συνέγραψε ο Θεόδωρος, οι κατηχήσεις του, οι επιστολές και τα επιγράμματά του, περιγράφουν καταλεπτώς το κοινόβιο, που βασίζεται στην πειθαρχία, την προσευχή, την υποχρεωτική εργασία και την κοινωνική προσφορά, και καθορίζουν επακριβώς τα καθήκοντα κάθε ενός διακονητού. Η μονή Στουδίου ήταν κέντρο προσευχής αλλά και κέντρο εργασίας, μια μεγάλη οικονομική μονάδα, με σημαντική κοινωνική και πολιτική επιρροή. Ο νέος ιδρυτής της Θεόδωρος Στουδίτης αντιστάθηκε, διώχθηκε και κέρδισε τον φωτοστέφανο του αγίου· οι διάδοχοί του δεν θα χρειασθεί να φτάσουν τόσο μακρυά, ίσως γιατί ήταν πια αρκετά ισχυροί, ώστε με την επιρροή τους να κατευθύνουν την βυζαντινή πολιτική στα θέματα που τους ενδιέφεραν. Όταν, π.χ., ο πατριάρχης Μιχαήλ Κηρουλάριος, λίγο μετά την χειροτονία του το 1043, αποπειράθηκε να διαγράψει τον Θεόδωρο Στουδίτη από το συνοδικό της Ορθοδοξίας, προκάλεσε την αντίδραση του ηγουμένου του Στουδίου Μιχαήλ Μερμεντούλου και στο τέλος αναγκάσθηκε, όχι μόνο να επαναφέρει το όνομα του Θεοδώρου στο συνοδικό[3], αλλά και να το διαβάσει δυνατά αυτοπροσώπως στην Αγία Σοφία, κατά την ακολουθία της Κυριακής της Σαμαρείτιδος (15 Μαΐου 1044)[4] —αναγκάσθηκε συνεπώς να ζητήσει δημόσια συγγνώμη από το μεγάλο μοναστήρι της πρωτεύουσας.

Ήδη από τον 9ο αι. η μονή Στουδίου ήταν πανίσχυρη. Στο δεύτερο μισό του 10ου αι., οι υποψηφιότητες για θέσεις μοναχών ήταν τόσο πολλές, που η αποταγή ενός νέου μοναχού, το ποσό δηλαδή που, σύμφωνα με μια (καταδικασμένη από τους νόμους αλλά εφαρμοζόμενη) συνήθεια, έπρεπε να καταβάλει για να γίνει δεκτός, έφτανε τις δύο λίτρες χρυσού[5] —ποσό εξαιρετικά σημαντικό, αν σκεφθεί κανείς πως σύμφωνα με την νομοθεσία του 10ου αι. δύο λίτρες χρυσού έπρεπε να είναι η αξία του συνόλου της έγγειας περιουσίας, από την οποία θα συντηρούνταν ένας ναύτης του βασιλικού στόλου[6]. Η ζωή στο μοναστήρι ήταν εξαιρετικά πειθαρχημένη και ελεγχόμενη ως την τελευταία της λεπτομέρεια από τον ηγούμενο: ο Συμεών ο Νέος Θεολόγος, δόκιμος μοναχός, που αποπειράθηκε να προσκολληθεί στον πνευματικό του πατέρα και την μυστικιστική προσέγγιση προς το θείο, αγνοώντας τις αρχές της μονής, γρήγορα εκδιώχθηκε[7].

Οι αρχές αυτές δεν μπορούσαν βέβαια να γίνουν εύκολα δεκτές στο Άγιον Όρος, που ως τον 10ο αι. είχε σχεδόν αποκλειστικά αναχωρητές, για τους οποίους η σχέση με τον πνευματικό πατέρα προείχε και η πειθαρχία σε τυπικά και κανονισμούς ήταν ανύπαρκτη[8]. Τα μεγάλα μοναστήρια, κοινοβιακά, βρίσκονταν τότε έξω από την χερσόνησο, στην νότια Χαλκιδική. Η αντίσταση των Αγιορειτών στην εισαγωγή του κοινοβιακού/στουδιτικού πνεύματος καταφαίνεται από λίγα κείμενα, κυρίως αγιολογικά και παλαιά, τα οποία θα εξετάσουμε παρακάτω. Το ότι δεν υπάρχουν περισσότερα τέτοια κείμενα δεν πρέπει να μας εκπλήσσει, δεδομένου ότι από τον 10ο αι. κ.ε. το οργανωμένο κοινόβιο εισήχθη και κυριάρχησε στο Όρος.

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[3] Όπου πάντοτε βρίσκεται. Βλ. J. Gouillard, «Le synodikon de l'Orthodoxie», *Travaux et Mémoires* 2 (1967) σ. 53, στ. 127.

[4] Ιωάννης Σκυλίτζης, εκδ. Thurn, σ. 434.

[5] *Vie de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien*, εκδ. I. Hausherr, Ρώμη 1928, § 11, στ. 3.

[6] I. και Π. Ζέπου, *Jus Graecoromanum* I, Αθήνα 1931, σ. 223.

[7] *Vie de Syméon*, § 21.

1. Ο αρχαιότερος Αγιορείτης άγιος είναι ο Πέτρος ο Αθωνίτης, του οποίου ο Βίος βασίζεται σε μυθολογικές αφηγήσεις, πιθανώς δάνεια από άλλες ψυχωφελείς μοναστικές συλλογές, που αντιπροσωπεύουν κυρίως προβλήματα των Αθωνιτών κατά την εποχή της συγγραφής του[9]. Ενώ ο άγιος επιδίδεται σε ακραίες μορφές ασκητισμού, ο διάβολος προσπαθεί να τον βάλει σε πειρασμό και να τον αποτρέψει από τον σκοπό του[10]. Την πρώτη φορά μεταμορφώνεται σε οικογενειακό του δούλο και τον προτρέπει, ανεπιτυχώς, να εγκαταλείψει την ερημία και να πάει σε ένα μοναστήρι της πατρίδας του, στην Μικρά Ασία. «Διότι, προσθέτει, με τί εξυπηρετείται καλύτερα ο Θεός; με την αναχώρηση στην ερημία, όπου μόνο τον εαυτό σου ωφελείς ... ή με το να διδάσκεις και να καθοδηγείς τους ανθρώπους και να τους κάνεις να επιστρέψουν από την πλάνη; Εγώ νομίζω, συνέχιζε ο διάβολος, πως το να σώσεις μια ψυχή από την πλάνη είναι καλύτερο από οποιουσδήποτε αγώνες στην ερημία». Τα λόγια αυτά δεν είχαν όμως αποτέλεσμα, διότι ο άγιος ανέφερε συμπτωματικά το όνομα της Παναγίας κι αμέσως ο διάβολος εξαφανίσθηκε κι αποκαλύφθηκε η σκευωρία.

Ο διάβολος επανήλθε επτά χρόνια αργότερα, μεταμφιεσμένος την φορά αυτή σε αρχάγγελο· και πάλι προσπάθησε να πείσει τον Πέτρο να επιστρέψει στον κόσμο *εἰς στήριγμα καὶ ὠφέλειαν πολλῶν ... ἄπελθε ἐν μοναστηρίοις τοῖς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ κἀκεῖ ἔσομαι μετὰ σοῦ καὶ ὠφελήσω πολλοὺς διὰ σοῦ.* Πάλι το τέχνασμα απέτυχε και ο Πέτρος απέμεινε άλλα 53 χρόνια στο Όρος κι όταν πέθανε το λείψανό του βρέθηκε από ένα κυνηγό.

Ο βιογράφος του Πέτρου δηλώνει πως έγραψε τον Βίο του ήρωά του για να δείξει στους Αγιορείτες πώς ζούσαν οι προκάτοχοί τους «τον παλιό καλό καιρό», χωρίς να έχουν κτήματα και πολύτιμα σκεύη. Είναι φανερό, όπως παρατήρησε η Παπαχρυσάνθου, πως γράφηκε γύρω στο 970-980, την εποχή των συγκρούσεων ανάμεσα στον ιδρυτή της Μεγίστης Λαύρας Αθανάσιο και τους παραδοσιακούς Αγιορείτες, που διαμαρτύρονταν για την αλλαγή του αρχαίου τύπου και την ίδρυση μεγάλων κοινοβίων με κτηματική περιουσία στο Όρος. Πέρα όμως από μια κάποια νοσταλγία για το παρελθόν, ο βιογράφος εκφράζεται με εχθρότητα για τα μοναστήρια που ήταν στον κόσμο και ασκούσαν κοινωνικό έργο —τόσο πολύ που δεν διστάζει να αποδώσει στον διάβολο τα επιχειρήματα που αναμφίβολα κυκλοφορούσαν και τότε από τους οπαδούς του κοινωνικού μοναχισμού. Για τους οπαδούς της άσκησης στην ερημία και της ησυχίας, ο μοναχισμός με κοινωνική αποστολή αποτελούσε πρότυπο ανταγωνιστικό, και τον απέρριπταν απερίφραστα. Την ίδια εποχή άλλωστε εκφραζόταν και η αντίθετη άποψη σε «φιλοκοινοβιακούς» Βίους Αγίων[11].

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[8] *Αθ. Μον.*, σ. 117.

[9] Δημοσιεύθηκε από τον K. Lake, *The Early Days of Monasticism on Mount Athos*, Οξφόρδη 1909, σ. 18-39. Πρβλ. *Αθ. Μον.*, σ. 85-92 και την αναλυτική μελέτη της Δ. Παπαχρυσάνθου, «La Vie ancienne de Saint Pierre l'Athonite. Date, composition et valeur historique», *Analecta Bollandiana* 92 (1974) σ. 19-61.

[10] Lake, σ. 28-30

2. Η σύγκρουση του Αθανασίου της Λαύρας με τους παραδοσιακούς Αθωνίτες είναι γνωστή και δεν θα χρειαστεί να επιμείνουμε[12]. Θα υπενθυμίσουμε μόνο πως όταν δολοφονήθηκε ο προστάτης του Αθανασίου Νικηφόρος Φωκάς, οι μοναχοί του Άθω, με επικεφαλής τον πρώτο Αθανάσιο και τον Παύλο τον Ξηροποταμηνό κατήγγειλαν στον Ιωάννη Τζιμισκή πως ο Αθανάσιος της Λαύρας πραγματοποιούσε μεγάλα έργα στο Όρος, κατέστρεφε την ησυχία και μεταποιούσε *τὸ ὄρος εἰς κόσμον·* και ζήτησαν την αποπομπή του. Όπως παρατηρεί ο Lemerle, το κόμμα των ερημιτών άνοιξε πόλεμο με τους κοινοβιάτες. Σύμφωνα με τους Βίους του Αθανασίου, ο ιδρυτής της Λαύρας παρουσιάσθηκε κι αυτός στον αυτοκράτορα, τον εντυπωσίασε και πέτυχε καινούργιες δωρεές για την μονή του. Ίσως και να συνέβη και αυτό. Το βέβαιο πάντως είναι ότι για να ρυθμιστεί η διαφωνία, ο αυτοκράτορας έστειλε στον Άθω τον μοναχό Ευθύμιο της μονής Στουδίου, ο οποίος είχε αρκετά ευρείες εξουσίες (όταν μιλά για τον εαυτό του χρησιμοποιεί την έκφραση *ἡ ἡμῶν μετριότης*[13], η οποία κανονικά χρησιμοποιείται από τον πατριάρχη), διαπίστωσε πως η διαφωνία οφειλόταν σε παρέμβαση του διαβόλου, πέτυχε ένα συμβιβασμό και συνέταξε το πρώτο τυπικό του Άθω, τον περίφημο Τράγο, τον οποίο υπέγραψε πρώτος πρώτος ο ίδιος ο Ιωάννης Τζιμισκής. Το κοινόβιο του Αθανασίου παρέμεινε στον Άθω μολονότι του επιβλήθηκαν μερικοί περιορισμοί (π.χ. ως προς τον αριθμό των ζευγαριών που δικαιούνταν να έχει), οι οποίοι όμως ποτέ δεν έγιναν σεβαστοί, δεδομένου μάλιστα ότι ο αριθμός των κοινοβίων γρήγορα αυξήθηκε, αρχίζοντας από την μονή Ιβήρων. Οι αντιδράσεις των παραδοσιακών δεν σταμάτησαν —στους Βίους αναφέρεται η περίπτωση μοναχού που προσπάθησε να δολοφονήσει τον Αθανάσιο, κι ενός άλλου που προσπάθησε να τον βλάψει με μάγια— αλλά σύντομα καταλάγιασαν. Οι ερημίτες θα ζήσουν από δω και μπρος δίπλα στο κοινόβιο, συχνά εξαρτώμενοι από το κοινόβιο, όχι πια ως αντίπαλοί του. Οι λαύρες με αναχωρητικά κελλιά ήταν ένας τρόπος οργάνωσης γνωστός και παλιότερα από πολλά άλλα μοναστήρια, συμπεριλαμβανομένης και της μονής του Στουδίου[14].

Δεν υπάρχει γνωστή πηγή που να αποδεικνύει ότι ο Αθανάσιος είχε σχέσεις ή και επαφές με την μονή Στουδίου πριν από την ίδρυση της Λαύρας. Είναι όμως βέβαιο ότι τα κανονιστικά κείμενα που συνέταξε για το μοναστήρι του εμπνέονται άμεσα από τα αντίστοιχα κείμενα του Θεοδώρου Στουδίτη. Συνεπώς το στουδιτικό πρότυπο επικράτησε στον Άθω χάρη στην δράση του Αθανασίου και χάρη στην υποστήριξη που του έδωσε ο Ιωάννης Τζιμισκής στέλνοντας ως τάχα αμερόληπτο διαιτητή ένα διακεκριμένο Στουδίτη. Δεν υπάρχει αμφιβολία για το ποια πλευρά ευνοούσε ο αυτοκράτορας στην διαμάχη μεταξύ των αναχωρητών του Άθω και των κοινοβιατών της Μεγίστης Λαύρας. Η στάση του αυτή μπορεί να οφειλόταν σε απλή προσωπική προτίμηση, ή στην επιρροή που ασκούσαν οι Στουδίτες, ή ακόμη στα οικονομικά ωφέλη που δημιουργούνταν για την αυτοκρατορία από την δημιουργία μιας λαύρας στην ερημία —ξεχέρσωμα γης, οικονομική ανάπτυξη της περιοχής, κλπ. Δεν πρέπει νομίζω να λησμονεί κανείς στο σημείο αυτό την νεαρά του Νικηφόρου Φωκά (964) που ενώ απαγόρευε την δωρεά κτημάτων στα μοναστήρια των πόλεων, την ενεθάρρυνε όταν επρόκειτο για λαύρες ιδρυμένες στην ερημία[15]. Δεν μπορούμε να ξέρουμε. Αυτό που γνωρίζουμε, είναι πως η έκδοση το Τράγου υπήρξε μια μεγάλη στροφή στην ιστορία του Άθω και στην ιστορία του βυζαντινού μοναχισμού γενικότερα.

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[11] Πρβλ. B. Flusin, «L'hagiographie monastique de Byzance au IXe et au Xe s.», *Revue Benedictine* 103/1-2 (1993) [Le monachisme à Byzance et en Occident du VIIIe au Xe siècle. Aspects internes et relations avec la société], σ. 41, 45-47.

[12] Πρβλ. όσα γράφει ο P. Lemerle στην εισαγωγή των *Actes de Lavra* I, Παρίσι 1970, σ. 39-41. Έχουμε νέα έκδοση των δύο Βίων του Αθανασίου: J. Noret, *Vitae duae antiquae Sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, Louvain 1982.

[13] *Actes du Prôtaton*, αρ. 7, στ. 11.

[14] *Αθ. Μον.*, σ. 80-82· D. Papachryssanthou, «La vie monastique dans les campagnes byzantines du VIIIe au XIe s.», *Byzantion* 43 (1973) σ. 158-180.

3. Υπάρχει όμως νομίζω και μια παλιότερη απόπειρα των Στουδιτών να εξαγάγουν το πρότυπό τους στον Άθω. Η πληροφορία αυτή νομίζω κρύβεται στην αφήγηση του Βίου του αγίου Βλασίου[16].

Ο Βλάσιος γεννήθηκε κοντά στο Αμόριο, χειροτονήθηκε κληρικός της Αγίας Σοφίας από τον πατριάρχη Ιγνάτιο (πριν το 877), πήγε κατόπι στη Ρώμη, όπου πέρασε 18 χρόνια στην μονή του αγίου Καισαρίου, και κατόπι επέστρεψε στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, επειδή επιθυμούσε να μπει στο κοινόβιον του Στουδίου και να ζήσει σ' αυτό σύμφωνα με την *ἀγγελικὴν διαγωγήν τε καὶ διατύπωσιν* του Θεόδωρου Στουδίτη. Ήλθε πραγματικά στο μοναστήρι, ασχολήθηκε με όλα τα έργα του κοινοβιάτη, αγαθοεργίες, κατάνυξη αλλά και σκληρή δουλειά. Γνωρίσθηκε με τον πατριάρχη Αντώνιο και με τον αυτοκράτορα Λέοντα ΣΤ΄. Μετά από τέσσερα χρόνια, γύρω στο 896, αποφάσισε να πάει στον Άθω *τὴν κατὰ μόνας μαρτυρικὴν παλαίστραν διεξελθεῖν ἐφιέμενος*. Ήλθε μαζί με μια ομάδα μαθητών του και προκάλεσαν αμέσως την αντίδραση των αναχωρητών. Ο βιογράφος μας περιγράφει πώς οι παλιοί Αθωνίτες τους κοροΐδευαν, προφανώς γιατί τους υποκινούσε ο πονηρός. Με την υπομονή όμως και την ευγένεια και χάρη σε μερικά θαύματα, ο Βλάσιος κατόρθωσε στο τέλος να τους γίνει ανεκτός.

Λίγο πριν πεθάνει τους προσέφερε και μια μεγάλη υπηρεσία χάρη στις υψηλές επαφές του. Όταν οι μοναχοί της μονής Κολοβού της Ιερισσού αποπειράθηκαν τότε να ιδιοποιηθούν ολόκληρη την χερσόνησο του Άθω, ο Βλάσιος μαζί με τον πρώτο ξεκίνησαν για την Κωνσταντινούπολη. Πριν φύγει, όρισε με διαθήκη ένα από τους μαθητές του ως διάδοχό του και του ανέθεσε την αρχηγία της μοναστικής του κοινότητας: *σὺ δὲ λοιπὸν ἀντ' ἐμοῦ μετὰ Θεὸν ἅπασι τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς ἀδελφοῖς ἀντιλαβοῦ καὶ φρούρει καὶ ἐπισκόπευε*. Κατόπι πήγε στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, συνάντησε τον ήδη γνωστό του αυτοκράτορα Λέοντα ΣΤ΄, πέτυχε την έκδοση του σιγιλλίου του 908, με το οποίο καταρρίπτονται οι διεκδικήσεις του Κολοβού[17], και μετά από λίγο πέθανε, χωρίς να γυρίσει στο Όρος. Δεν γνωρίζουμε τί απέγιναν οι μαθητές του, δεν γνωρίζουμε καν πώς λεγόταν το καθίδρυμα στο οποίο ζούσαν. Πιθανώς διαλύθηκαν.

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[15] Ζέπων, *Jus* I, σ. 252: *κελλία δὲ καὶ τὰς καλουμένας λαύρας ἐν ἐρήμοις οἰκοδομεῖν...*

[16] *Acta Sanctorum* Νοεμβρίου IV, στ. 666-668. Για τα γεγονότα και την χρονολογία βλ. *Αθ. Μον.*, σ. 145-153.

[17] *Actes du Prôtaton*, άρ. 2.

Από την παραπάνω αφήγηση παρατηρούμε τα εξής.

α) Ο Βλάσιος ήταν ομολογουμένως ενθουσιώδης οπαδός του στουδιτικού μοναχικού προτύπου.

β) Τέσσερα χρόνια αφού πραγματοποίησε το όνειρό του να γίνει μοναχός στην Στουδίου και αφού απέκτησε τις υψηλές επαφές που του εξασφάλιζε η πρωτευουσιάνικη αυτή μονή, φεύγει για τον Άθω.

γ) Μετακινείται εκεί με μια ομάδα μαθητών του. Εμφανίζεται δηλαδή σαν ηγέτης μιας αποικίας Στουδιτών στον Άθω και αυτό εξηγεί την έντονη και άλλως ανεξήγητη εχθρική συμπεριφορά των αναχωρητών.

δ) Τίποτα δεν λέει πως η ομάδα του Βλασίου ήταν οργανωμένη σε κοινόβιο. Παρά ταύτα, όταν φεύγει για την Κωνσταντινούπολη ο Βλάσιος ορίζει τον διάδοχό του και του αναθέτει να κυβερνά τους αδελφούς *μετά Θεόν*. Με άλλα λόγια, η ομάδα του Βλασίου εμφανίζεται πως είχε μια διοικητική δομή σχετική με την δομή των κοινοβίων, όπου ο ηγούμενος είχε το δικαίωμα να διορίζει με απόλυτη ελευθερία τον καθ' όλα παντοδύναμο διάδοχό του[18].

Είναι βέβαιο πως η απόπειρα τοῦ Βλασίου δεν είχε συνέχεια —δεν ξέρουμε καν αν ποτέ ο Βλάσιος δημιούργησε πραγματικό κοινόβιο στο Όρος. Τα λίγα μοναστήρια που αναφέρονται κατά τα μέσα του 10ου αι., όπως του Ξηροποτάμου ή του Κλήμεντος, δεν φαίνεται να έγιναν ποτέ μεγάλα κοινοβιακά καθιδρύματα. Μόνο με τον Αθανάσιο το πραγματικό κοινόβιο και το στουδιτικό πρότυπο εισήχθη στο Όρος σε μια Λαύρα, που ορθώς ονομάσθηκε Μεγίστη.

Έχουμε εδώ ένα πολύ γενικότερο φαινόμενο της εποχής. Ανατολή και Δύση εξελίχθηκαν στο σημείο αυτό παράλληλα, όχι όμως ταυτόσημα. Την ίδια περίπου εποχή που ο Θεόδωρος Στουδίτης θεσμοθετούσε στο Βυζάντιο το νέο κοινόβιο, στην Νότια Γαλλία ο Βισιγότθος Βενέδικτος, ηγούμενος της μονής Aniane, με την υποστήριξη του Γάλλου βασιλιά προωθούσε την εξάπλωση και την επικράτηση του «κοινοβιακού» τυπικού του Αγίου Βενεδίκτου. Και υπήρξαν και επαφές —μικρές και ασήμαντες, αλλά επαφές— ανάμεσα σ' αυτούς που προωθούσαν τα δύο κοινοβιακά ιδεώδη. Στην Υποτύπωση του Αγίου Αθανασίου του Αθωνίτη αναγνωρίσθηκαν δύο ασήμαντες παράγραφοι, που προέρχονται όμως από τον κανόνα του Αγίου Βενεδίκτου[19].

Τα αγιορειτικά μοναστήρια δεν έγιναν βέβαια αντίγραφα της μονής Στουδίου. Η επίδραση των αναχωρητών και των ερημιτών παρέμεινε ισχυρότατη στον Άθω. Την εποχή που η μονή Στουδίου, καθιερωμένο κωνσταντινουπολίτικο κέντρο εξουσίας κι επιρροής κατοικούμενο από φιλόδοξους στρατιώτες του Χριστού, εξεδίωκε τον μεγαλύτερο βυζαντινό μυστικιστή, τον Συμεών Νέο Θεολόγο, το Άγιον Όρος παρέμενε κοντά στα αρχικά ιδεώδη της αγγελικής πολιτείας. Για να ξαναγνωρίσει με τον καιρό την νέα ιδιορρυθμία και να επανέλθει σήμερα πάλι στο κοινοβιακό σύστημα.

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[18] P. De Meester, *De monachico statu juxta disciplinam byzantinam*, Βατικανό 1942, σ. 17, 216-218.

[19] H.-G. Beck, «Die Benediktinerregel auf dem Athos», *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 44 (1951) σ. 21-24; J. Leroy, «Saint Athanase l'Athonite et la Règle de Saint Benoît», *Revue d'ascetique et de mystique* 29 (1953) σ. 108-122.

SUMMARY

ATHOS AND THE STUDITE COENOBITIC MODEL

As we know from the book by D. Papachrysanthou, the monastic state of Mount Athos originally consisted of isolated anachorites. Lives of saints who lived in the ninth and tenth centuries show that the hermits reacted strongly when attempts were made to introduce the coenobitic system into the monastic peninsula. These efforts were initiated mainly by monks connected with the Studion Monastery in Constantinople, which was the centre of the revival in coenobitism. In any event, the coenobitic system, which seems to have been supported by the emperors in Constantinople for social and, most likely, economic reasons, was introduced into Athos during the tenth century by St Athanasios of the Great Lavra.

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VI

ΤΟ ΔΙΚΑΣΤΙΚΟ ΠΡΟΝΟΜΙΟ ΤΗΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΜΟΝΗΣ ΧΙΟΥ

Τον Ιούνιο του 1045, ο Κωνσταντίνος Θ΄ Μονομάχος, για να καθησυχάσει τις ανησυχίες των μοναχών της Νέας Μονής της Χίου, που είχε ιδρυθεί πρόσφατα[1], εξέδωσε ένα χρυσόβουλλο και παραχώρησε στην μονή προνομιακή δικαστική μεταχείριση. Σε περίπτωση αντιδικίας, οι μοναχοί διατηρούσαν το δικαίωμα να ενάγουν τους άλλους σε οποιοδήποτε δικαστήριο ήταν αρμόδιο· αντίθετα, οι αγωγές και οι μηνύσεις εναντίον της μονής έπρεπε να παρουσιάζονται αποκλειστικά στον ίδιο τον αυτοκράτορα: *μήτε θεματικὸν ἢ πολιτικὸν δικαστήν, μήτε τινὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἀρχόντων... ἀλλὰ μόνον ἀκροᾶσθαι τούτων τὸν τὴν αὐτοκράτορα λαχόντα διέπειν ἀρχὴν... τὸν δὲ κριτὴν δεχόμενον, κατὰ τὰς βασιλικὰς ἀποφάσεις πληροῦν... μόνον γὰρ τὸ θειότατον καὶ βασιλικὸν βῆμα ταῖς κατὰ τούτων ἤδη δίκαις ἀνέωγε, καὶ ᾧ ἂν ὁ κρατῶν μετὰ τὴν τῆς κροτουμένης ἀγωγῆς ἀκρόασιν, ἐπιτρέψειε τὴν διάγνωσιν ἢ ἐκβίβασιν*[2]. Κάθε αγωγή, δηλαδή, εναντίον της μονής μπορούσε να διερευνηθεί μόνο από τον ίδιο τον αυτοκράτορα, ο οποίος και θα ανέθετε την λήψη απόφασης ή την εκτέλεση της δικής του απόφασης σε κάποιο δικαστή ή σε οποιαδήποτε κρατική υπηρεσία επέλεγε ο ίδιος. Συνεπώς, κανείς δικαστής δεν θα είχε πια το δικαίωμα να παρουσιασθεί στο μοναστήρι εξ αιτίας οποιασδήποτε δίκης, ούτε να ασκήσει εξουσία επί της μονής, των μοναχών ή της περιουσίας της (*μή τινα δικαστὴν εἰς τὴν δηλωθεῖσαν μονὴν περιέναι δίκης οἱασδήτινος ἕνεκεν, μήτε τι σύμβολον ἀρχικῆς δυναστείας κατ᾽ αὐτῆς*

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[1] Η τελευταία μελέτη για την ιστορία της Νέας Μονής Χίου, με λεπτομερή ανάλυση των πηγών, οφείλεται στον Χ. ΜΠΟΥΡΑ, *Ἡ Νέα Μονὴ τῆς Χίου. Ἱστορία καὶ ἀρχιτεκτονική*, Αθήνα 1981. Ιδιαίτερα για την ίδρυση, γύρω στο 1042, βλ. σελ. 21 κ. ε. Το θέμα της ίδρυσης επανεξετάζεται και από τη Ντούλα ΜΟΥΡΙΚΗ, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni on Chios*, Αθήνα 1985, 21-29.

[2] *JGR* I, 629-631.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003418528-6

καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ τε καὶ ὑπ' αὐτὴν ἐπιδείκνυσθαι)[3]. Το προνόμιο αυτό θα ίσχυε για κάθε είδους υποθέσεις, είτε για κτηματικές διεκδικήσεις είτε για διαφορές ως προς τα σύνορα των κτημάτων είτε για οποιοδήποτε άλλο πρόβλημα ή αμφισβήτηση (*καινοτομίας... καὶ ἀμφιβολίας*). Το χρυσόβουλλο κλείνει με τον (συνηθισμένο για τις φορολογικές απαλλαγές) κατάλογο κρατικών υπαλλήλων, που καλούνται να σεβαστούν τα περιεχόμενα του χρυσόβουλλου: ανάμεσά τους αναφέρεται και ο δρουγγάριος της βίγλης, ο πρόεδρος δηλαδή του μεγαλύτερου αυτοκρατορικού δικαστηρίου, μαζί με τους δικαστές της Κωνσταντινούπολης (δηλαδή του δικαστηρίου του Ιπποδρόμου[4]) και των επαρχιών (*κριτῶν πολιτικῶν καὶ θεματικῶν*).

Το προνόμιο φαίνεται ευρύτατο· όπως είναι φυσικό, παρερμηνεύθηκε και θεωρήθηκε ως περίπτωση δικαστικής immunitas στο Βυζάντιο. Νομίζω, όμως, ότι παραχωρήθηκε για να αντιμετωπισθούν συγκεκριμένες απειλές κατά της μονής κι αυτό και θα προσπαθήσω να δείξω παρακάτω, αφού πρώτα αναλύσω τον τρόπο με τον οποίο παρερμηνεύθηκε.

1. *Το προνόμιο της Νέας Μονής δεν έχει σχέση με την δικαστική immunitas.*

Η δικαστική immunitas μας είναι γνωστή από την προφεουδαρχική περίοδο της Δυτικής Ευρώπης· υπάρχει όταν παραχωρηθεί σε ιδιώτη το δικαίωμα να απονέμει δικαιοσύνη μέσα στα κτήματά του. Ο θεσμός αυτός αποτελεί βασική υφαρπαγή των εξουσιών του κράτους εκ μέρους του τοπικού άρχοντα· εμφανίζεται συνήθως στα έγγραφα προνομίων με τη μορφή απαγόρευσης προς τους κρατικούς υπαλλήλους, συμπεριλαμβανομένων και των δικαστών, να εισέλθουν στο προνομιούχο κτήμα, ακόμη κι αν αυτό ήταν απαραίτητο για μιαν ανάκριση (ad causas audiendas) ή για να βρεθούν μάρτυρες. Άμεση συνέπεια του προνομίου αυτού ήταν να δημιουργηθούν από τους φεουδάρχες ιδιωτικές αστυνομίες και ιδιωτικά δικαστήρια, που ελέγχονταν αποκλειστικά από τους ίδιους. Πρέπει πάντως να υπογραμμισθεί ότι το δικαίωμα απονομής δικαιοσύνης συνήθως δεν παραχωρούνταν επίσημα και στη Δυτική Ευρώπη, αλλά μάλλον το ιδιοποιούνταν αυθαίρετα οι φεουδάρχες[5].

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[3] *JGR* I, 629.

[4] Το δικαστήριο του Ιπποδρόμου έπαιξε στα μέσα του ΙΑ΄ αιώνα σημαντικό ρόλο στην ερμηνεία της παλαιάς νομοθεσίας. Έχω γράψει πώς καταλαβαίνω την λειτουργία του δικαστηρίου της Κωνσταντινούπολης στο άρθρο μου: The Peira of Eustathios Romaios: an Abortive Attempt to Innovate in Byzantine Law, *Fontes Minores* 7, 1986, 169-192.

Στο καθ' εαυτό Βυζάντιο, κατά τη γνώμη μου, τέτοια προνόμια δεν φαίνεται να παραχωρήθηκαν πριν από το 1204, όσο δηλαδή η αυτοκρατορία διατηρούσε τους συγκεντρωτικούς θεσμούς της και ο αυτοκράτορας παρέμενε ισχυρός, ικανός να καταπολεμήσει αποτελεσματικά κάθε απόπειρα υφαρπαγής των εξουσιών του κράτους[6]. Αλλά και μετά το 1204, παρά την διάσπαση και την δημιουργία παράλληλων εξουσιών, το βυζαντινό κράτος της Κωνσταντινούπολης φαίνεται πως απέφυγε αυτού του είδους τις παραχωρήσεις —τουλάχιστον δεν έχουμε, όσο γνωρίζω, καμιά σαφή και αναντίρρητη μαρτυρία. Μόνο από την αυτοκρατορία της Τραπεζούντας σώζεται μια τέτοια «σαφής και αναντίρρητη μαρτυρία» στο χρυσόβουλλο του 1364 για την μονή Σουμελά, με το οποίο παραχωρήθηκε στους μοναχούς το αποκλειστικό δικαίωμα να εισπράττουν τους φόρους των παροίκων τους και να τους απονέμουν δικαιοσύνη (*κρίνεσθαι καὶ ἀπαιτεῖσθαι*)[7].

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[5] N.-D. Fustel De Coulanges, *Histoire des institutions politiques de l'ancienne France*, τομ. V: Les origines du système féodal, Παρίσι^2 1900, 366 κ. ε.

[6] Υπάρχει μια φαινομενική εξαίρεση στην Κάτω Ιταλία: το 1045, ο κατεπάνω Ιταλίας Ευστάθιος Παλατίνος, για να ανταμείψει τον κριτή Βυζάντιο από το Bari για την υποστήριξη που πρόσφερε στα αυτοκρατορικά στρατεύματα, του παραχώρησε δύο χωριά στην Απουλία με φορολογική απαλλαγή και με το δικαίωμα να εγκαταστήσει σ' αυτά κι άλλους χωρικούς για να τον υπηρετούν. Στο έγγραφο προσδιορίζεται ότι οι χωρικοί αυτοί θα δικάζονται σύμφωνα με το λογγοβαρδικό δίκαιο από τον ίδιο τον Βυζάντιο για κάθε είδους υποθέσεις, πλήν του φόνου. Βλ. J. Lefort - J. M. Martin, Le sigillion du catépan d'Italie Eustathe Palatinos pour le juge Byzantios (décembre 1045), *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome, Moyen-Age Temps Modernes* 98/2, 1986, 525-542, κυρίως 541. Πρόκειται για ειδική περίπτωση που δεν έχει σχέση με όσα συνέβαιναν στην υπόλοιπη αυτοκρατορία, διότι πρόκειται για περιοχή στην οποία εφαρμόζεται το λογγοβαρδικό και όχι το βυζαντινό δίκαιο. Άλλωστε, ο Βυζάντιος ήταν τοπικός κριτής (iudex) και συνεπώς είχε αρμοδιότητα να απονείμει δικαιοσύνη στο όνομα του αυτοκράτορα.

[7] *MM* V, 279.

Έχει δημιουργηθεί σύγχυση γύρω από το θέμα για τρείς λόγους. (α) Η παραχώρηση δικαστικών προνομίων γίνεται στο Βυζάντιο με έγγραφα παρόμοια με αυτά που χρησιμοποιούνται για την παραχώρηση φορολογικών απαλλαγών· συνεπώς τα έγγραφα αυτά μπορούν να παρερμηνευθούν. (β) Στο Βυζάντιο οι δικαστές ήταν και φοροεισπράκτορες και, συνεπώς, κάθε περιορισμός των φοροεισπρακτικών τους δραστηριοτήτων μπορεί να παρερμηνευθεί και ως περιορισμός του δικαιώματός τους να απονέμουν δικαιοσύνη. (γ) Στο Βυζάντιο κάθε διορισμός σε δημόσια θέση συνεπαγόταν και την απονομή δικαιοσύνης μέσα στα πλαίσια της νέας αυτής δικαιοδοσίας[8], συνεπώς συχνά εμφανίζονται να απονέμουν δικαιοσύνη άτομα που δεν είναι επαγγελματίες δικαστές, πρόκειται όμως για υπαλλήλους του κράτους, που ενεργούν υπό την υπαλληλική τους ιδιότητα και όχι ως ιδιώτες.

Η φορολογική απαλλαγή στο Βυζάντιο, η *ἐξκουσσεία* θεωρήθηκε από παλιά ως το αντίστοιχο της Δυτικής immunitas[9] (χωρίς όμως να είναι τελείως ταυτόσημη προς αυτή, δεδομένου ότι συνήθως η *εξκουσσεία* συνεπάγεται μερική μόνον απαλλαγή από τούς φόρους). Ο πρώτος που μελέτησε τον θεσμό σε βάθος, ο Jakovenko, παρατήρησε, ορθά κατά τη γνώμη μου, πως η δικαστική immunitas δεν μαρτυρείται στο Βυζάντιο πριν από τον 14ο αιώνα[10]. Η άποψη όμως αυτή αμφισβητήθηκε από τον Uspenskij[11], και αργότερα, με μεγαλύτερη έμφαση, από τον Ostrogorsky[12], τον Freijdenberg[13] και τον Melovski[14], που υποστήριξαν πως δικαστική immunitas υπήρχε στο

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[8] N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe s.*, Παρίσι 1972, 319.

[9] M. PLATON, Observations sur le droit de la προτίμησις en droit byzantin, *Revue générale des droits, de la législation et de la jurisprudence en France et à l'étranger* 28, 1904, 304-305.

[10] P. A. JAKOVENKO, *K istorii immuniteta v Vizantii*, Jurjev 1908, 28-31, 66-70.

[11] K. USPENSKIJ, Ekskussija-immunitet v Vizantijskoj imperii, *Viz. Vrem.* 23, 1917-1922, 86.

[12] G. OSTROGORSKY, Pour l'histoire de l'immunité à Byzance, *Byzantion* 28, 1958, 165-254, κυρίως 236 κ. ε. (γαλλική μετάφραση από τα ρωσικά: K istorii immuniteta v Vizantii, *Viz.Vrem.* 13, 1958, 55-106· και σερβική: G. OSTROGORSKI, *Sabrana dela* I, Βελιγράδι 1969, 405 κ. ε.)

[13] M. FREJDENBERG, Ekskussija v Vizantii XI-XII vv., *Velikolukskij Gosudarstvennyi Pedagogičeskij Institut. Učenye Zapiski* 3, 1958, 354-360.

[14] H. MELOVSKI, Einige Probleme der Exkusseia, *JÖB* 32/2, 1981, 363-364.

Βυζάντιο τον ΙΑ΄, αν όχι ήδη από τον Θ΄ αιώνα. Την άποψη του Jakovenko υποστήριξε ο Každan με νέα επιχειρήματα, δείχνοντας κυρίως ότι η παραχώρηση σε ιδιώτες δικαστικών προνομίων με χρυσόβουλλο, δεν σήμαινε πως τους δινόταν και το δικαίωμα να δικάζουν τους άλλους ούτε καν τους παροίκους τους[15]. Επρόκειτο απλώς για προνόμια των οποίων θα έχαιρε ο παραλήπτης του χρυσόβουλλου όταν και εάν ο ίδιος παρουσιαζόταν ως διάδικος ενώπιον της δικαιοσύνης.

Οι όροι του εγγράφου προνομίων της Νέας Μονής και, ιδιαίτερα, η απαγόρευση εισόδου των δικαστών στην μονή, θεωρήθηκαν ως στοιχεία που αποδεικνύουν την ύπαρξη της δυτικοευρωπαϊκής immunitas στο Βυζάντιο. Στην πραγματικότητα, όμως, προσεκτική ανάγνωση του χρυσοβούλλου δείχνει ότι τίποτε τέτοιο δεν συμβαίνει, δεδομένου ότι πουθενά δεν φαίνεται ότι οι μοναχοί είχαν το ελάχιστο δικαίωμα να απονέμουν δικαιοσύνη. Όπως πολύ σωστά υποστήριξε ο Každan, πρόκειται μόνο για μια ειδική μεταχείριση της μονής με σκοπό να της εξασφαλίσει αυξημένη προστασία σε περίπτωση αγωγής εναντίον της.

Η παραχώρηση προνομιακής δικαστικής μεταχείρισης σε ιδιώτες είναι σπάνια στο Βυζάντιο, αλλά το παράδειγμα της Νέας Μονής δεν είναι μοναδικό[16]. Το δεύτερο δικαστικό προνόμιο που γνωρίζουμε από τον 11ο αιώνα προέρχεται από το αρχείο της μονής Ιβήρων, σ' αυτό όμως αναφέρεται ρητά ο πολύ ειδικός και συγκεκριμένος λόγος που προκάλεσε την παραχώρησή του. Τον Ιούλιο του 1079, με χρυσόβουλλο του αυτοκράτορα Νικηφόρου Βοτανειάτη, με το οποίο επικυρώνονταν[17] και οι φοροαπαλλαγές και τα προνόμια, που το μοναστήρι είχε πάρει από προηγούμενους αυτοκράτορες, προστίθεται και μια παράγραφος σχετικά με το δικαστήριο που ήταν αρμόδιο για την εκδίκαση των υποθέσεων της μονής. Επειδή οι Ίβηρες μοναχοί δεν γνώριζαν ελληνικά (*ὡς ἀλλογλώσσων τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ τυγχανόντων*), ο αυτοκράτορας ορίζει πως κάθε δίκη που τους αφορά, ποινική ή αστική (*ἐγκληματικὸν ἢ καὶ χρηματικόν*), θα διεξάγεται μόνον μπροστά στο δούκα ή κατεπάνω Θεσσαλονίκης, δηλαδή τον ανώτατο στρατιωτικό διοικητή της περιοχής στην οποία ανήκε το Άγιον Όρος, και όχι από δικαστή του θέματος ή άλλο φοροεισπράκτορα. Είναι προφανές πως σκοπός του χρυσόβουλλου ήταν να προστατεύσει τούς Ίβηρες από αδικίες και φορολογικές επιβαρύνσεις και για τον λόγο αυτό τους παρέδιδε στην δικαιοδοσία ενός άρχοντα που δεν ασχολούνταν με δημόσιες εισπράξεις. Και ειδικότερα το δικαστικό προνόμιο αποσκοπούσε στο να προστατεύσει το μοναστήρι από έξωθεν, ενδεχομένως άδικες, επιθέσεις, που θα εκμεταλλεύονταν την άγνοια ή την περιορισμένη γνώση της ελληνικής γλώσσας εκ μέρους των Ιβήρων μοναχών. Πουθενά δεν φαίνεται η διάθεση να τους παραχωρηθεί το δικαίωμα απονομής δικαιοσύνης μέσα στα κτήματά τους ή και έξω απ' αυτά.

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[15] A. P. KAŽDAN, Ekskussija i ekskussaty v Vizantii, *Vizantijskie Očerki*, Μόσχα 1961, 202-206.

[16] Δικαστικό προνόμιο είχαν, σύμφωνα με τον νόμο, οι συγκλητικοί. Βλ. ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΑ 6, 1, 32.

[17] *Actes d'Iviron* II, έκδ. J. LEFORT, N. OIKONOMIDÈS, Denise PAPACHRYSSANTHOU, Vassiliki KRAVARI, Hélène MÉTRÉVÉLI, Παρίσι 1990, αρ. 41.

Το δικαστικό προνόμιο της μονής Ιβήρων παρουσιάζει σημαντικές ομοιότητες με το προνόμιο της Νέας Μονής, χωρίς βέβαια να φθάνει στο σημείο να ορίζει τον ίδιο τον αυτοκράτορα ως τον μόνο δικαστή τους. Η μονή Ιβήρων επέτυχε το προνόμιο της για λόγους ειδικούς.

Υπάρχει και μια ακόμη παλιότερη περίπτωση. Όταν ο Αθανάσιος ίδρυσε την μονή Μεγίστης Λαύρας, το πρώτο μεγάλο κοινόβιο στο Άγιον Όρος, αντιμετώπισε την αντίδραση των παραδοσιακών Αθωνιτών, που δεν επιθυμούσαν την εγκαθίδρυσή κοινοβίου στο Όρος, όπου μέχρι τότε ζούσαν μόνο ερημίτες[18]. Τότε όμως ο Αθανάσιος είχε την υποστήριξη του Νικηφόρου Φωκά, που σύντομα έγινε αυτοκράτορας και που, για να τον προστατεύσει καλύτερα, του παραχώρησε μεταξύ Αυγούστου 963 και Μαΐου 964 ένα χρυσόβουλλο, που καθόριζε πως η μονή της Λαύρας δεν μπορούσε να δικασθεί παρά μόνο στο αυτοκρατορικό δικαστήριο[19]. Πρόκειται, δηλαδή, για ένα προνόμιο απόλυτα συγκρίσιμο με της Νέας Μονής —και με συνέχεια απολύτως παρόμοια, όπως θα δούμε.

Κανείς δεν πείραξε την Λαύρα όσο βασίλευε ο Νικηφόρος Φωκάς. Όταν όμως δολοφονήθηκε, ο Πρώτος του Αγίου Όρους και οι λοιποί ηγούμενοι ενήγαγαν τον Αθανάσιο στο αυτοκρατορικό δικαστήριο, όπως τους υποχρέωνε το προνομιακό χρυσόβουλλο, με την κατηγορία ότι ανατρέπει τις αθωνιτικές παραδόσεις. Προφανώς ήλπιζαν πως ο διάδοχος (και ηθικός αυτουργός της δολοφονίας) του Νικηφόρου Φωκά θα τους υποστήριζε. Ο Ιωάννης Τσιμισκής, όμως, είχε κι αυτός ταχθεί υπέρ των κοινοβίων και τελικά έστειλε στο Άγιον Όρος ένα στουδίτη μοναχό για να συμβιβάσει τα πράγματα και να συντάξει τον Τράγο (972), το πρώτο Τυπικό του Όρους, με το οποίο καθιερώθηκε η παρουσία κοινοβίων στην μοναστική χερσόνησο. Το δικαστικό προνόμιο της Λαύρας, λοιπόν, επετέλεσε με επιτυχία τον σκοπό του.

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[18] Μελέτησα το θέμα της επιβολής του κοινοβίου και των αντιδράσεων που προκάλεσε, στην ανακοίνωση με τίτλο «Ο Άθως και το στουδιτικό πρότυπο κοινοβίου» : *Το Άγιον Όρος· χθές, σήμερα, αύριο*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1996, 239-245.

[19] *Actes de Lavra* I, έκδ. P. LEMERLE, A. GUILLOU, N. SVORONOS, Denise PAPACHRYSSANTHOU, Παρίσι 1970, αρ. 5, στ. 61-62.

Πρέπει, λοιπόν, να εξετάσει κανείς αν υπήρχαν ειδικοί λόγοι που να εξηγούν την παραχώρηση παρόμοιου προνομίου στην Νέα Μονή της Χίου· με άλλα λόγια, να αναζητήσει τους λόγους που προκαλούσαν τις ανησυχίες των ιδρυτών της.

2. *Η ιδιοτυπία των ιδρυτών της Νέας Μονής και οι εχθρότητες που δημιουργούσαν.*

Φαίνεται πως η Νέα Μονή ιδρύθηκε στην αρχή της τρίτης εικοσαετίας του ΙΑ΄ αιώνα και πως οι ιδρυτές της, οι μοναχοί Νικήτας και Ιωάννης, πήραν τα πρώτα τους προνόμια από τις αυτοκράτειρες Ζωή και Θεοδώρα το 1042[20]. Στη συνέχεια, η μονή υποστηρίχθηκε πολύ από τον Κωνσταντίνο Μονομάχο, που της παραχώρησε κτήματα, φορολογικές απαλλαγές και ετήσια επιχορήγηση ύψους 72 χρυσών νομισμάτων[21].

Από τα πρώτα βήματά της όμως αντιμετώπισε προβλήματα εξ αιτίας των ιδρυτών της, που είχαν, φαίνεται, φανατικούς φίλους και φανατικούς εχθρούς.

Οι σχετικές πληροφορίες προέρχονται από ένα εξαιρετικά προκατειλημμένο συγγραφέα, είναι πιθανότατα διαστρεβλωμένες και ασφαλώς δυσνόητες. Πρόκειται για το κατηγορητήριο που συνέταξε ο Μιχαήλ Ψελλός εναντίον του τέως πατριάρχη Μιχαήλ Κηρουλαρίου (λίγο μετά τις 8 Νοεμβρίου 1058)[22].

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[20] ΜΠΟΥΡΑΣ, *Νέα Μονή*, σελ. 22, υποσ. 6.

[21] *JGR* I, 615-618, 628.

[22] E. KURTZ - F. DREXL, *Michaelis Pselli Scripta Minora* I, Μιλάνο 1936, 234-275. Νεότερη έκδοση MICHAELIS PSELLI, *Orationes Forenses et Acta*, έκδ. G. DENNIS, Στουτγάρδη-Λιψία 1994, 1-103.

Πρώτα απ' όλα, ο Ψελλός κατηγορεί τον πατριάρχη ως αιρετικό. Για να το αποδείξει, επιδιώκει να τον συνδέσει με τους ιδρυτές της Νέας Μονής, τους οποίους κυρίως χαρακτηρίζει ως αιρετικούς. Αναφέρεται λεπτομερώς στην προστασία που τους παρέσχε ο Κηρουλάριος, στην συνεργασία που είχε μαζί τους, στην επιρροή που άσκησε στους αυτοκράτορες για χάρη τους, στο κείμενο που είχε, φαίνεται, γράψει για να τους επαινέσει και προστατεύσει[23]. Με την ευκαιρία αυτή περιγράφει διάφορες μυστικιστικές τελετές, που οι μοναχοί της Χίου, ο Νικήτας και ο Ιωάννης, οργάνωναν σε συνεργασία με κάποια μυστηριώδη μάντισσα λεγόμενη Δοσιθέα, και προσπαθεί να συνδυάσει όλα αυτά με γνωστές και προ πολλού καταδικασμένες αιρέσεις (ειδωλολατρεία με επίδραση χαλδαϊκή, νεστοριανισμό, μεσσαλιανισμό)· με το τέχνασμα αυτό, συνηθισμένο στους βυζαντινούς ρήτορες, ο κατήγορος μπορεί να είναι σίγουρος για την καταδίκη του κατηγορουμένου. Όλα αυτά βέβαια με την ρητορική ασάφεια που διακρίνει τα έργα του Ψελλού.

Συγκεκριμένα για τους μοναχούς, με τους οποίους, σημειωτέον, διατηρούσε προσωπικές σχέσεις και αλληλογραφούσε[24], ο Ψελλός μιλά για φήμες (*διατεθρύλληται)* ότι παρέβησαν τους κανόνες των πατέρων, ότι εισήγαγαν νέα ήθη και κανονισμούς σχετικά με την φύση των πνευματικών δυνάμεων και με την εκκλησιαστική τάξη πρώτα στα μοναστήρια τους (περισσότερα από ένα) και κατόπι σε άλλα μοναστήρια. Τους κατηγορεί, επίσης, ότι περιέρχονταν τα χωριά μαζί με την Δοσιθέα, η οποία ντυνόταν σαν άνδρας[25], και της παραστέκονταν στις μαντικές της δραστηριότητες, τις οποίες πετύχαινε πέφτοντας σε έξαρση και μέθη (*βακχεία)* κουνώντας τις βλεφαρίδες της με ορισμένο τρόπο και παίρνοντας συγκεκριμένες στάσεις με το σώμα της[26]. Τέλος, καταγγέλλει ότι όλα αυτά, που περιγράφονται ως οράματα της Δοσιθέας (ότι δηλαδή επικοινωνούσε με αγίους και ιδιαίτερα με την Παναγία και τον Ιωάννη τον Πρόδρομο), γοήτευαν πολλούς απλούς ανθρώπους, αλλά και τον πατριάρχη. Αλλού γίνεται λόγος για άτομα που βλέπουν το θείον φως[27] —για ησυχαστικές πρακτικές δηλαδή. Εξ άλλου, οι μοναχοί της Χίου υποστήριζαν, φαίνεται, στα συγγράμματά τους, πως η Θεοτόκος γνώρισε τις ωδίνες του τοκετού, πράγμα που τους εξομοίωνε, στα μάτια του Ψελλού, με τους Νεστοριανούς[28].

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[23] KURTZ - DREXL, I, 236 κ. ε.· πρβλ. 264, 274 (για το κείμενο).

[24] KURTZ - DREXL, II, 58-60: Ο Ψελλός ζητά την ευλογία των μοναχών, διαπραγματεύεται ανταλλαγές βιβλίων, και ευχαριστεί για μια αποστολή μαστίχας.

[25] Και αυτό είναι μία κατηγορία: KURTZ - DREXL, I, 270 κ. ε.

[26] *Ό. π.*, 235-238.

[27] *Ό. π.*, 248.

Υπήρχαν, φαίνεται, αντιδράσεις· όσο βασίλευε ο Κωνσταντίνος Μονομάχος δεν εκδηλώθηκε τίποτε. Αμέσως μετά τον θάνατό του, όμως, τα πραττόμενα των μοναχών της Χίου κατηγορήθηκαν επίσημα, φαίνεται, από μέλη της συγκλήτου (αναφέρεται το όνομα του Δαβίδ υπάτου και νουμεραρίου, του διοικητή δηλαδή μιας από τις μεγάλες φυλακές της Κωνσταντινούπολης[29]). Ξέσπασε σκάνδαλο. Η αυτοκράτειρα Θεοδώρα (1055-56), προφανώς εκτελώντας τις διατάξεις του χρυσοβούλλου του 1045, από το οποίο ξεκινήσαμε και οι οποίες καθόριζαν ότι μόνον ο αυτοκράτορας δικαιούνταν να εξετάσει οιαδήποτε αγωγή εναντίον των μοναχών της Νέας Μονής, κάλεσε τους δύο ιδρυτές στο αυτοκρατορικό δικαστήριο[30], στο οποίο συμμετείχαν συγκλητικοί, μοναχοί και αρχιερείς (όχι όλοι, γράφει ο Ψελλός, αλλά μόνον όσοι δεν είχαν μολυνθεί από το δαίμονα: δηλαδή οι εχθροί τους). Η διαδικασία, όπως περιγράφεται από τον Ψελλό, είναι χαρακτηριστική. Οι εχθροί των Νεαμονιτών τους κατήγγειλαν στην αυτοκράτειρα Θεοδώρα, η οποία ανέλαβε να εξετάσει την υπόθεση ([Θεοδώραν] *πεπείκασι βοηθεῖν καὶ τὴν ἀπάτην ἐλέγχειν καὶ τοὺς προστάτας τῆς ἀσεβείας εὐθύνειν*). Βέβαια, προσθέτει ο Ψελλός, κανονικά θα έπρεπε ο πατριάρχης να υπερασπισθεί το ποίμνιό του που απειλούνταν από την αίρεση· επειδή όμως ο ίδιος ήταν με το μέρος των αιρετικών, *τὸ εὐσεβὲς καὶ θεῖον βασίλειον* (*βῆμα*) ανέλαβε την προστασία των πιστών. Οι μοναχοί της Χίου παρουσιάσθηκαν στην σύγκλητο, η οποία και διατύπωσε έγγραφο κατηγορητήριο· τελικά καταδικάσθηκαν με απόφαση της ιεράς συνόδου, στην οποία ο πατριάρχης δεν έλαβε μέρος, και εξορίσθηκαν χωριστά ο ένας από τον άλλο, χωρίς όμως να καθαιρεθούν. Η περιουσία της μονής δημεύθηκε. Είναι ενδιαφέρον να σημειωθεί εδώ η ακρίβεια με την οποία έγιναν σεβαστοί κατά τη διαδικασία οι όροι του χρυσοβούλλου του 1045. Η αγωγή των Νεαμονιτών έγινε στον αυτοκράτορα, ο οποίος ανέθεσε την εξέταση της υπόθεσης στη σύγκλητο, η οποία με τη σειρά της ανέθεσε την καταδίκη και τον καθορισμό της ποινής στην αρμοδιότερη πατριαρχική σύνοδο. Όπως γράφει και το χρυσόβουλλο του 1045 (βλ. πιό πάνω, σ. 49) η αγωγή ξεκινά από τον αυτοκράτορα και από εκεί περνά σε όποιον δικαστή εκείνος αναθέσει την υπόθεση *μετὰ τὴν ἀκρόασιν*.

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[28] Ό. π., 250.

[29] Μπουρας, *Νέα Μονή*, 26, υποσ. 9.

[30] Δεδομένου ότι το μοναστήρι είχε ειδικό προνόμιο, δεν υπάρχει λόγος να αναζητήσουμε εδώ τον «αρμόδιο δικαστή» για τέτοιου είδους υποθέσεις. Σχετικά με τον αρμόδιο δικαστή, βλ. Ruth Macrides, The Competent Court, στο Angeliki Laiou D. Simon (εκδ.), *Law and Society in Byzantium: Ninth - Twelfth Centuries*, Washington D.C. 1994, 117-129.

Οι Νεαμονίτες αποκαταστάθηκαν αργότερα, επί Ισαακίου Κομνηνού, λόγω της επιρροής του Κηρουλαρίου, επέστρεψαν στο μοναστήρι τους και ξαναπήραν τα κτήματά τους[31]. Από την αφήγηση φαίνεται πως οι μοναχοί της Χίου, μολονότι καταδικάσθηκαν, διατηρούσαν πολλούς οπαδούς και υποστηρικτές, που δεν τους εγκατέλειψαν στις δυσκολίες ακόμα και την εποχή της δίκης· και πως η πρόσκαιρη επιτυχία των αντιπάλων τους μπορεί να οφειλόταν στην ίδια την αυτοκράτειρα Θεοδώρα.

Είναι προφανές ότι η περιγραφή του Ψελλού είναι προκατειλημμένη και διαστρέφει τα γεγονότα παρουσιάζοντας τους ιδρυτές της Νέας Μονής σαν θαυματοποιούς λαϊκού πανηγυριού. Εφόσον οι δραστηριότητές τους αυτές γίνονταν αποδεκτές από μερικές τουλάχιστον εκκλησιαστικές και πολιτικές αρχές, πιθανότερο φαίνεται πως οι μοναχοί της Χίου, που ξεκίνησαν, σαν τόσους άλλους, από τη θαυματουργή ανακάλυψη εικόνας της Παναγίας, πρέσβευαν μιαν ιδιότυπη, μυστικιστική λατρεία, με έντονο το στοιχείο του ενθουσιασμού και της μέθεξης· *θεαγωγία, θεοφορία, επίπνοια, χρησμῳδός, μυσταγωγοί, προρρήσεις, χρησμοί*, ιδού μερικοί χαρακτηριστικοί όροι, που χρησιμοποιεί ο Ψελλός. Τέτοιες συνήθειες προκαλούσαν πάντοτε αντιδράσεις και συνεπώς δημιουργούσαν κινδύνους για τη μονή και τους μοναχούς.

Ας σημειώσουμε ακόμη ότι, σύμφωνα με την παράδοση, στη Χίο οι μοναχοί ζούσαν αρχικά σε απομόνωση και ερημία (*κατά μόνας Θεῷ*), το σύστημα φαίνεται όμως πως άλλαξε αργότερα, μετά το 1057[32].

Δραστηριότητες αυτού του είδους δεν είναι πρωτοφανείς τον ΙΑ΄ αιώνα. Ο ίδιος ο Ψελλός μας πληροφορεί πως η αυτοκράτειρα Ζωή, βαθειά προσηλωμένη στα θρησκευτικά θέματα, είχε ιδιαίτερο ενδιαφέρον για την προφητεία και μαντεία[33]. Οι προφητείες και μαντείες ενδιέφεραν επίσης ιδιαίτερα και τον Κωνσταντίνο Μονομάχο, ο οποίος ενίοτε στρεφόταν και προς επαγγελματίες μάντεις[34], και τον πατριάρχη Μιχαήλ Κηρουλάριο, όπως συνάγεται από το κατηγορητήριο. Συνεπώς, οι μυστικιστικές δραστηριότητες των μοναχών της Χίου, είχαν συμπάθειες στούς υψηλούς κύκλους της πρωτεύουσας.

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[31] KURTZ - DREXL I, 243-245, 255, πρβλ. και 251, όπου επαναλαμβάνεται ότι η λήψη απόφασης παρεπέμφθη στην ιερά σύνοδο, η οποία ως εκτελεστικό όργανο τους εξόρισε χωρίς να τους καθαιρέσει.

[32] ΜΠΟΥΡΑΣ, *Νέα Μονή*, 29 και σημ. 10.

Όχι όμως παντού· η αυτοκράτειρα Θεοδώρα ήταν αντίθετη και στη θέση της αυτή υποστηριζόταν από πολλούς, τόσο στη σύγκλητο, όσο και στη ιερά σύνοδο, οι οποίοι περίμεναν την κατάλληλη στιγμή για να χτυπήσουν τους Νεαμονίτες. Το έπραξαν αμέσως μετά τον θάνατο του Μονομάχου.

Τον ΙΑ΄ αιώνα πραγματοποιούνταν αλλαγές στον κόσμο των βυζαντινών μοναχών. Το αναμορφωμένο κοινοβιακό σύστημα, που εκπροσωπούνταν κυρίως από την κωνσταντινουπολίτικη μονή των Στουδίου, επιβαλλόταν όλο και περισσότερο, ακόμη και στα πιό απομονωμένα ερημητήρια, όπως το Άγιον Όρος. Επί Κωνσταντίνου Μονομάχου, η μονή Στουδίου ήταν παντοδύναμη, ικανή να επιβάλει στον πατριάρχη Μιχαήλ Κηρουλάριο μιαν οδυνηρή δημόσια ταπείνωση[35].

Ταυτόχρονα όμως εμφανίζονταν νέα μυστικιστικά κινήματα. Πιο γνωστός εκπρόσωπός τους είναι ο Συμεών ο Νέος Θεολόγος, ο οποίος, ας σημειωθεί, είχε στα νιάτα του εκδιωχθεί από την μονή Στουδίου ακριβώς για τις ιδέες του αυτές. Οι νέες λατρευτικές μέθοδοι, που εισάγονταν τότε, βασίζονταν στην άμεση μυστική επικοινωνία με το θείο, μέσω της αυτοσυγκέντρωσης και της κατ' ιδίαν εντατικής προσευχής. Η πνευματικότητα του Νέου Θεολόγου μετέτρεψε σημαντικά την εικόνα του Βυζαντινού μοναχισμού τον ΙΑ΄ αιώνα.

Μέσα σ' αυτό το πλαίσιο θα πρέπει να τοποθετηθούν και οι μοναχοί της Χίου και οι δραστηριότητές τους, που τόσο διαστρεβλώθηκαν από τον

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[33] Μιχαήλ ΨΕΛΛΟΣ, *Χρονογραφία* , έκδ. Renault, I, 149-150.

[34] ΨΕΛΛΟΣ, *Χρονογραφία*, II, 12.

[35] ΣΚΥΛΙΤΖΗΣ, έκδ. THURN, 434: ο πατριάρχης αποπειράθηκε να διαγράψει τον Θεόδωρο Στουδίτη από τους αγίους, όμως η αντίδραση του στουδίτη ηγουμένου Μιχαήλ Μερμεντούλου ήταν τέτοια που, όχι μόνο το σχέδιο εγκαταλείφθηκε, αλλά και ο πατριάρχης υποχρεώθηκε να αναγνωρίσει δημόσια το λάθος του. Την Κυριακή της Σαμαρείτιδος, ενώ διαβαζόταν στην Αγία Σοφία ο κατάλογος των ορθοδόξων

Ψελλό. Πέρα από τις προσωπικές συμπάθειες του αυτοκρατορικού ζεύγους και του πατριάρχη, οι ιδρυτές της Νέας Μονής εκπροσωπούσαν, πιθανώς, μια κατεύθυνση μέσα στο καινούργιο μυστικιστικό ρεύμα που εμφανιζόταν τότε στην Κωνσταντινούπολη. Το επίπεδό τους ήταν πιθανώς πιο κοντά στον «άνθρωπο του δρόμου» (και τον ίδιο τον αυτοκράτορα, του οποίου η πνευματικότητα δεν παρουσίαζε τίποτε το εξαιρετικό), οι απαιτήσεις τους ήταν ασφαλώς πιο προσγειωμένες, αφού κατόρθωσαν να δημιουργήσουν ένα τόσο σπουδαίο μοναστήρι —ένα σύμπλεγμα μοναστηριών. Οι ιδέες τους όμως και οι πρακτικές τους ξεχώριζαν από το κοινοβιακό πρότυπο, που μόλις είχε θριαμβεύσει στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, και προκαλούσαν αντιδράσεις. Και οι ίδιοι οι μοναχοί αισθάνονταν την απειλή. Όντας αιθεροβάμονες, κινδύνευαν να χάσουν την περιουσία τους. Κινδύνευαν όμως περισσότερο για την ιδεολογία τους.

Ο Κωνσταντίνος Μονομάχος, που αναμφισβήτητα τους υποστήριζε, είχε κάθε λόγο να τους πιστέψει. Ήταν εύκολο να υποπτευθεί κανείς πως οι ιδεολογικοί αντίπαλοί τους επιδίωκαν να ιδιοποιηθούν την περιουσία τους και να τους εξουθενώσουν χρησιμοποιώντας την δικαιοσύνη, ή ορισμένους συντηρητικούς ή φορμαλιστές εκκλησιαστικούς κύκλους. Κι έτσι ακολούθησε το παράδειγμα του Νικηφόρου Φωκά (πιθανώς και άλλων αυτοκρατόρων, που δεν μας είναι γνωστοί). Παραχωρώντας τους με το χρυσόβουλλο του 1045 την προνομιακή δικαστική μεταχείριση, που αναφέραμε, τους παρείχε εξασφάλιση από οποιαδήποτε επίθεση εναντίον τους· κανείς δεν θα μπορούσε να τους συντρίψει (ή να τους οδηγήσει σε πτώχευση) με μια απλή κακοδικία —οι κατήγοροι θα χρειάζονταν να πείσουν το αυτοκρατορικό δικαστήριο, που φυσιολογικά θα ήταν πιό ουδέτερο σε τέτοιου είδους κατηγορίες και οπωσδήποτε δεν θα ήταν προκατειλημμένο εναντίον τους (και στην περίπτωση του Μονομάχου θα ήταν ευνοϊκά διατεθειμένο). Το ίδιο ίσχυε φυσικά και σε περίπτωση αντιδικίας για αστικές διαφορές, π.χ. για κτήματα, διότι και τότε το πανίσχυρο επιχείρημα της αίρεσης θα μπορούσε να χρησιμοποι-

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από το Συνοδικό, ο πατριάρχης διέκοψε τον αναγνώστη για να προφέρει μόνος του, με στεντόρεια φωνή, το όνομα του Θεοδώρου Στουδίτη.

ηθεί από τούς αντιδίκους. Αλλά βέβαια τα πράγματα θα εξαρτιόνταν πλέον, όπως είναι φυσικό, από την προσωπική διάθεση του εκάστοτε αυτοκράτορα[36].

Το δικαστικό προνόμιο, που δόθηκε το 1045 στους μοναχούς της Νέας Μονής, δεν έχει καμμία σχέση με παραχώρηση του δικαιώματος να δικάζουν· όπως και στην περίπτωση της μονής Ιβήρων και της μονής της Λαύρας, που είδαμε παραπάνω, αποσκοπούσε στο να παράσχει ειδική προστασία σε μια μονή που διέτρεχε αυξημένους κινδύνους. Οι Ίβηρες κινδύνευαν από τούς αχόρταγους γείτονές τους και τους ακόμη πιο αχόρταγους φοροεισπράκτορες, που θα μπορούσαν να εκμεταλλευθούν την ανεπαρκή τους γνώση των ελληνικών· οι Λαυριώτες του Ι΄ αιώνα, κινδύνευαν από την αντίδραση των παραδοσιακών Αθωνιτών· οι Νεαμονίτες, χειρότερα, είχαν να αντιμετωπίσουν την εχθρότητα του μοναστηριακού κατεστημένου της βυζαντινής πρωτεύουσας. Σε ένα καλοδιοικούμενο κράτος, όπως ήταν το Βυζάντιο των μέσων του ΙΑ΄ αιώνα, τα προστατευτικά μέτρα του Κωνσταντίνου Μονομάχου είναι και κατανοητά και αναμενόμενα. Και, φαίνεται, εγγράφονται στο πλαίσιο μιάς γενικότερης πολιτικής των αυτοκρατόρων, που απέβλεπε στην προστασία των κάθε είδους μειοψηφιών.

Αν κανείς θελήσει να χρησιμοποιήσει σύγχρονη γλώσσα, θα μπορούσε να υποστηρίξει ότι το δικαστικό προνόμιο του 1045 δόθηκε στην Νέα Μονή για να προστατεύσει μια καινούργια ιδέα και θρησκευτική πρακτική από τις δυνάμεις της συντήρησης. Συμπαθητικό.

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36. Ήδη επί Κωνσταντίνου Μονομάχου η μονή σύρθηκε στο αυτοκρατορικό δικαστήριο για κτηματικές διαφορές και μάλιστα φαίνεται πως έχασε τη δίκη. Επειδή όμως οι αντίδικοί της για να κερδίσουν, είχαν παρασιωπήσει το γεγονός ότι η μονή είχε αυτοκρατορικό προνόμιο (*τὸ κατὰ τοῦ χρυσοβούλλου τῆς βασιλείας μου λέγειν παρασιωπήσαντες, ψήφισμα ἔλαβον*), ο αυτοκράτορας παρενέβη με νέο χρυσόβουλλο του 1049 και δικαίωσε το μοναστήρι: *JGR* I, 634-635.

Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos granted (1045) to the monastery of Nea Moni on Chios a judicial privilege: any action against the monastery should be brought to court in front of the imperial tribunal only (*JGR* I, 629-631).

In the present article it is argued that this privilege has nothing to do with the Western *immunitas*, because the privilege does not give the monastery any right to judge other people. The privilege is compared to the similar ones granted to the monasteries of Lavra (963-964) and Iviron (1079). And it is interpreted as an effort to protect the founders of Nea Moni, who were seemingly spiritual mysticists, from the monastic establishment of Constantinople, especially the cenobitic Stoudiou movement.

In fact, as we learn from Psellos, the founders of Nea Moni were eventually accused and condemned of heresy by the imperial tribunal under empress Theodora (1055-56), but were later re-instated thanks to the support of Patriarch Michael Keroularios.

VII

THE MONASTERY OF PATMOS AND ITS ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS

(11th–12th centuries)*

The purpose of the present paper is to take advantage of a set of documentation that survives,[1] and to attempt to show how the monastery of Patmos, from the time of its foundation up to 1204, was a major economic unit and how it was served by all its assets, even by its library, in its economic functions. In other words, I would like to attract attention to some less-known aspects of a medieval monastery, especially to stress the non-negligible economic endeavours of the monastery and to underline, amongst other things, the role that its library could play — its value as capital and the services that it could render. It goes without saying that similar activities may have existed — and probably did exist — in other monasteries, but the case of Patmos is a very early one and is relatively well documented.

The island of Patmos is a big brown rock with few trees and few cultivable fields. It became famous because St John the Evangelist was exiled on it and wrote the Apocalypse there. In the middle ages, the island seems to have remained deserted, or with very few inhabitants. Right before the foundation of the monastery in 1088, the imperial official who surveyed it found no inhabitants and mentions just a small church: this only shows that the island was frequented by neighbours, probably shepherds who brought there their flocks for grazing, and who might have then, as they still do to day on desert islands, built a small "outside church" (*exoklissi*) at the top of

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* Unpublished 'Runciman lecture' given at Kings College, London, 2 February 2000.

[1] The Byzantine archive of Patmos has been published almost entirely by Fr. Miklosich – J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca* VI, Vienna 1890 (hereafter MM). A new diplomatic edition has been undertaken by collaborators of the Centre for Byzantine Research of Athens and two volumes have appeared, containing the acts issued by emperors and those of public servants: *Ἔγγραφα Πάτμου* A. *Αὐτοκρατορικά*, ed. Era Vranoussi; and *Ἔγγραφα Πάτμου* B. *Δημοσίων Λειτουργῶν*, ed. Maria Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, both published in Athens in 1980 (hereafter *Eggrapha A* and *Eggrapha B*). The edition of the remainder (patriarchal, monastic and private documents) is now in preparation by Era Vranoussi and myself; in what follows, passages thereof are quoted by their page numbers in MM accompanied by the line numbers of the original document, as they will appear in the diplomatic edition.

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the hill, where the ruins of an old basilica used to be, a humble building that could serve as shelter in bad weather and that they would care for when they came to inspect their herds, bringing, once a year, a priest to sing mass therein. For all practical purposes, the island was abandoned, and certainly did not possess any books when the new monastery of John the Theologian was founded.[2]

This monastery and its success turned around the fortunes of Patmos. Soon after its foundation, it provided security to the inhabitants thanks to its fortifications, it became a major economic power in the region, attracted men to the island, and gave it fame. After many ups and downs, Patmos became a major centre in the Aegean, not only for spiritual matters but also as a centre of shipowners and shipbuilders (in the sixteenth century). Western and eastern travelers visited it to pay their respects to the island of the Apocalypse and to the famous monastery, but also to see its monuments and its library, which had in the meantime acquired some fame. Not only did they see the books, but also they took some of them away: this is the case, for example, of the famous codex Clarkianus with the works of Plato, which is now in the British Library. Still the library kept quite some wealth, down to our days. It contains more than 1000 manuscripts on parchment or on paper, many of them belonging to the Byzantine period.

The primary function of the library in a medieval monastery was utilitarian. A minimal number of books, say ten or twenty, were absolutely indispensable to support the church services — many such services being held simultaneously in the *katholikon* as well as in the several *parekklesia* that every respectable monastery possessed; there were also the other ritual readings, such as those of lives of saints or moralistic speeches performed during the meals in the monastic refectory; there was at last the constant need for support of the spiritual activities in the convent, for the ritual, for the service performed by confessors, and such like.

Then there was the general reading of the members of the congregation. Theodore Stoudites in his regulations describes the strict rules under which the books of the library were circulating among the monks for reading. We know of similar arrangements in other monasteries, always stressing the high care with which books should be treated, obviously because they were seen as precious items and had to be protected as such. As the habit was then to read aloud, many members of the monastic community could profit from this activity, as the illiterate ones would get instructed from the readings of their literate colleagues. This is why it is often clearly specified that in all oratories belonging to the monastery, at least two monks should be assigned.

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[2] Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *Eggrapha B*, no. 51, line 410.

There is a very good example to illustrate this point. Sabbas, the abbot of Patmos who resigned this position at about 1127/8, had previously erected with the collaboration of two monks, the new oratory of the Asomatos (i.e. St Michael) at some distance from the monastery. He wanted two monks to stay in the oratory of the Asomatos; at least one should be literate, to perform the church reading. For the time being he suggested that the monks Luke and Theoktistos, who did so much work for the construction of the oratory, should be left undisturbed there, Luke to work at the garden and the orchard and Theoktistos to practice *hesychia* and sing mass, making himself available to help Luke in moments of emergency. From the same document we learn that the oratory of the Asomatos was then endowed with six books, that should stay attached to it for ever — a Gospel, the Epistles, the Prophecies, and the books with the services of the year, Oktoechos, Menaion and Triodion: all books necessary for performing mass and other services; moreover a specific book, not a very expensive one since it was written on paper not on parchment, containing lives of the early monastic fathers of the desert, a *paterikon*, was given personally to Theoktistos to keep for as long as he lived: obviously this was his preferred reading, for his moments of relaxation or contemplation.[3]

It is obvious that all books were not readily available to all monks. From the South Italian monastery of San Nicola in Casole we have a long list of books that had been given to monks on loan. Most of them are ecclesiatical and liturgical, issued by decision of the librarian alone. Few lay texts are mentioned. But certain books were accessible only by special permission. A note by the librarian in the list of his books is revealing: "The notary ... received the book of Aristophanes as well as the criticism of sophists by Aristotle: this was done in execution of an order of the *hegoumenos*."[4] The protection of the souls being of utmost importance, the charming literature of the pagan Hellenes was seen as a potential threat and the only person able to judge the level of maturity of each monk, was the abbot. But still these "dangerous" books were kept and protected in the monastic libraries together with the others; only their circulation was limited to the few and select.

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[3] MM, 242, 244–245 = lines 23–24, 65–78 of the original document. For the date of the document and the personality of its author, see Era Vranoussi, "Σάββας, καθηγούμενος τῆς Μονῆς Πάτμου", *Hellenika* 19 (1966) pp. 216–225.

[4] H. Omont, "Le 'typikon' de Saint-Nicolas in Casole", *Revue des Etudes Grecques* 3 (1890) pp. 380–381, esp. 390.

The foundation of the monastery of Patmos was the work of one person, the monk and priest Christodoulos, who is now venerated as a saint.[5] His career is full of adventure. A curious mind, never satisfied with what he had, he travelled a lot: often he fled enemies but he also travelled because he wanted to; in some ways, he liked the adventure. In his lifetime, he had many ups and downs, but he was always able to escape from the difficulties and to create a success right after each major setback that he suffered. He was an inspiring spiritual father for others but also a good administrator and a remarkably talented manager of monastic manpower. This was the main characteristic of his that opened his way to success, by rendering him an indispensible collaborator for those who wanted to create monasteries to save their souls but were unable to find monks to man them.

Christodoulos was born before 1030 close to Nicaea, in Asia Minor, and as a youth he was tonsured as a monk in a foundation belonging to the monastic community of Mount Olympus, the actual Ulu dağ in the neighbourhood of Proussa. But he wanted to visit foreign lands, "to travel like a sparrow and live in the desert";[6] so he started travelling from place to place. Initially he took the road to Rome, a usual pilgrimage for oriental monks, but changed course and arrived in the Holy Land in the early fifties of the century, where he paid his respects to the places of the Passion and entered the laura of St Sabas in Palestine. He was 25 years old.

Anarchy reigned in the Holy Land during the eleventh century because of repeated clashes between Arab tribes. Many Christians left fearing for their lives and properties. Christodoulos left for the western coast of Asia Minor, where he joined the well known monastic community of Mount Latros, in the neighbourhood of ancient Miletus. He stayed there for years and was enthusiastic with the system which prevailed, and which combined the common life of the *koinobion*, with the solitude of individual ascetes: all monks, who worked and prayed all week separately, independently of the rule that they followed, met together on Sundays, under the close supervision of an abbot, who ensured discipline. "There were no indecent discussions or improper meetings, no quarrel or hate or jealousy, no hidden property of the cenobitic monks whatsoever, but life was well mannered, deprived of concerns and of property; men were inherently good, like saints, and disposed of humility, the crown of all these exploits."[7] These enthusiastic lines, translated from the regulation that Christodoulos composed for his own institution, describe what was his monastic ideal. In 1078 patriarch Kosmas ordained Christodoulos to be *hegoumenos* of the monastery of Stylos and, automatically, general administrator, *protos*, of the whole monastic community of the Latros.

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[5] The history of the monastery of Patmos and its founder Christodoulos has been studied and clarified (on the basis of the archive and of the medieval *Lives* of Christodoulos) by Era Vranoussi, *Τὰ ἁγιολογικὰ κείμενα τοῦ ὁσίου Χριστοδούλου, ἱδρυτοῦ τῆς ἐν Πάτμῳ μονῆς*, Athens 1966; her initial conclusions have been updated, without any substantial change, in the long introduction to *Eggrapha A*. Concerning the foundations of Christodoulos, one must always consult A. Kirby, "Hosios Christodoulos: an eleventh-century Byzantine saint and his monasteries", *Byzantinoslavica* 57 (1996) pp. 293–309.

[6] This line of Psalm 10 (11) 1 is used by Christodoulos himself to describe his youthful trends: MM, 60 = line 80 of the original document.

This was a wealthy and powerful community, with a history of success and privilege of more than one and a half century. In 1078, they possessed considerable cash, many precious vessels and garments and a series of properties, the privileges of which were guaranteed by imperial documents bearing the gold bullae of the emperor (including rented real estate in Constantinople). They also possessed an important library, that Christodoulos himself looked into enriching by new acquisitions.

The situation would have been ideal for Christodoulos, who was now member of a monastic community that he obviously liked very much, and gave him the opportunity to show his qualities of leadership. But the historical context of the times was not in favour of long-term solutions. Byzantine Asia Minor was in 1078 victim of the raids of the newly arrived Turks. After their historic victory at Mantzikert in 1071, the newcomers, especially the irregular nomads, taking advantage of the Byzantine civil wars that ensued, overran the countryside of the peninsula plundering and destroying it; and little by little they started blockading the fortified positions. Christodoulos, deeply frightened, repaired the fortifications of Stylos with the hope that his monastery might hold. But the strategy of the Turks threw him off balance. They did not try to take any stronghold by assault. They just scattered around and blockaded it, cutting it off from the rest of the Byzantines. "They would not miss a needle",[8] wrote Christodoulos. So, in March 1079 he conceded defeat and left his monastery with a group of monks in search of another safer place to which to transfer the whole Latros community. At first he went to the port of Strovilos, in the western coast of Caria.

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[7] Hypotyposis : MM, 61 = lines 145–158 of the original document.

[8] Hypotyposis : MM, 61 = lines 188–189 of the original document.

There he visited an acquaintance, Arsenios Skenoures, an old and wealthy man, who had inherited a monastery in Strovilos but was unable to keep it up for the lack of manpower. The arrival of Christodoulos with his companions solved this problem. They took over the foundation, and started establishing contacts in Strovilos, for instance with Maria Kaballoures, another owner of an unmanned monastery that would soon come into the hands of Christodoulos.

The fear of the Turkish advance in Asia Minor pushed the monks further west. Skenoures possessed land in the island of Kos, and put it at the disposal of Christodoulos, who wanted by all means to place the barrier of the sea between himself and the Turks. He thought that these, being nomads and completely inexperienced in sailing, would not be able to reach him on an island. At a place called then — and today — Pili, he took over and repaired a pre-existing church of the Virgin and built cells and fortifications, creating thus a new monastery, that received its first privilege in March 1080. In the meantime Skenoures left for a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and nothing further was heard of him. Christodoulos remained in possession of all his properties. The new monastery prospered in security.

In the meantime, Byzantine Asia Minor was falling rapidly. The administrative and military centre of Melanoudion was captured by the Turks, while the treasury of the monastery of Stylos was sacked — no doubt after an agreement with the monks, allowing the invaders to take away all precious items, including the gold bullae of the chrysobulls but not the documents themselves, in exchange for the security of the monks. The monastery of Stylos continued its precarious existence in a place that was now controlled by the nomads.

Christodoulos learned that the *oikonomos* that he had left behind was still in control of the books and documents of Stylos. So he organized an expedition of a kind that one would hardly expect a monk to undertake: from Kos he sent a boat with soldiers, who found the *oikonomos* and brought him back together with the books that he possessed. As Christodoulos says, were it not for this commando operation, all of them would have been lost.

Christodoulos was still the *hegoumenos* of Stylos but he had also his new monastery of Kos. He brought all the books to Constantinople and convinced the patriarch that they should be kept there with a view to returning to their real owner, the monastery of Stylos, when better times would hopefully arrive. But the patriarch Nicholas Grammatikos (1084–1111), appreciating the risk that Christodoulos took in order to protect the books, decided that three-quarters of them should be delivered to St Sophia and be kept *en attendant* the restoration of Stylos, while the last quarter, all books without decoration, was delivered to Christodoulos for his new monastery. This decision was confirmed by the synod in an official meeting, and was completed by the official delivery of the said books to Christodoulos, who brought them to Kos.[9]

It is probable that during their peregrinations, the monks who left Latros in search of a better fate carried with them some books for everyday use; it is also probable that they found some others in the monastic institutions of Skenoures or Kavalloures, which they took over. But the real basis of the library of Christodoulos obviously came from the above operation, of which Christodoulos was proud. His new monastery was lucky enough to start with the acquisition of a ready-made library.

But Christodoulos could not stay at the same spot for long. Although his new monastery gave him all that he could have dreamt of — a community functioning in the fashion of Latros together with absolute security — soon after his installation in Kos, he started looking around for a better position. The pretext was that the lay neighbours were often in contact with the monks, quarrelled with them and disturbed their effort to reach the quiet status, the *hesychia*. He looked around and found out that Patmos lay in the neighbourhood and was deserted, without any permanent inhabitants. This island offered not only the absolute calm but also an incomparable religious prestige because of St John and the Apocalypse. He made his plans secretly and started acquiring property much to the north of Kos, in the immediate neighbourhood of Patmos, of which no one spoke yet in 1087.

One year later, in 1088, he convinced the emperor to give him the entire desert island of Patmos free of all tax burden. A major privilege, one would say. Not quite, though. The island, being desert, did not then pay any taxes, consequently the state was losing nothing by being generous. On the contrary, it expected that this abandoned piece of real estate would become productive thanks to the work of the monks of Christodoulos. In exchange, Christodoulos returned to the state all his properties in Kos and Strovilos. In other words, the arrangement was actually profitable for the state, which gave out non-productive land and received in exchange productive and taxable properties. Not to speak of the economic prospect of developing an abandoned land.[10]

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[9] The operation is described by Christodoulos himself in an appendix that he added to his will on 15 March 1093 : MM, 87 = lines 29–41 of the original document.

[10] I have analyzed the economic implications of the cession of Patmos to Christodoulos in : *Fiscalité et exemption fiscale à Byzance (Xe–XIe s.)*, Athens 1996, pp. 205–207, 249–250.

Christodoulos drew also advantage from the arrangement, as he could expect to remain beyond the reach of the formidable Byzantine tax collectors. So, together with his faithful, he started the construction of the new monastery with the most indispensable of all parts — the fortified walls. In May 1091 the monastery was already operating peacefully and Christodoulos then issued his *hypotyposis*, a regulation outlining the history of his foundation and describing its administration and spiritual operation.

This regulation provides details for most of the administration of the material wealth of the monastery: the general management was in the hands of an *oikonomos* while three 'accountant-storage holders' were responsible, one for the cash, another for the wardrobe and a third for the iron utensils, and others were in charge of food and its storage and preparation. The books were kept in the church; I quote: "The abbot should also appoint an *ekklesiarches*, a pious man who knows and is able to perform properly all ecclesiastic ceremonies with order, like a specialist. This *ekklesiarches* will receive with a written list and keep carefully all the books of the monastery, its titles of property and whatever else belongs to the church." This paragraph[11] shows that the library was then a living part of the new foundation. Again life seemed calm and promising.

Yet, in the summer of 1092, the Turks made a major raid on the islands and Christodoulos was forced once again away from his monastery, the fortifications of which were not yet completed. This was to be the last peregrination of the Holy Father: he moved with his companions to Euripos, the present-day Chalkis in Euboea, where in March 1093 he wrote his last will and died. In the meantime, the Turkish ships were defeated and the Byzantines returned to the eastern Aegean. Calm prevailed again, and the monks moved back to Patmos in 1094, bringing with them the remains of the founder. From then on, after Christodoulos' death, and down to our days, the community of Patmos has never abandoned the premises.

These trips across the Aegean were made on private ships that the monastery possessed and exploited. The relevant passages of the secret will of Christodoulos give us an image of the saint that has little to do with the monastic ideals of complete poverty and of definite opposition to the ideas of gain and, even more, of loans giving interest.

In 1093 Christodoulos, then a refugee in Euripos, possessed four boats that he controlled closely.[12] Two, one a *koutzourin*[13] and one a cargo ship of the type called *plati*, were relatively important since they had two masts each; the two others, one *platidion* (=small *plati*) and a new *exelastikon* were smaller, and were used for the immediate needs of the monks. But the bigger ones were given out to *pistikoi*, i.e. to trusted men who undertook to run them for the account of the monastery. The *koutzourin* was given to John Pagkas, who may have contributed an amount of money either for the construction of the ship and thus be a co-owner, or to the business contract that the ship was out to execute, in which case he may have been a business associate of the monastery (which, in this case, would be engaging in commercial business: the text is not clear and one cannot say with certainty what the arrangement was). The big *plati* was entrusted to a captain from Euripos, Basil Moroioannes, and was about to leave port when Christodoulos wrote his will, being leased (*naulon*) for 42 *hyperpyra* to transport merchandise to an unknown destination (no doubt a fresh agreement, decided after the arrival of the monks to Euripos in view of the beginning of the spring sailing season). The captains were expected to give detailed accounts to the monks every now and then.[14]

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[11] Hypotyposis : MM, 74 = lines 1061–1072 of the original document.

[12] Secret will of Christodoulos : MM, 82 = lines 18–21 of the original document.

Christodoulos was also somehow interested in dealing with money.[15] He had borrowed from another monk, Luke from Cappadocia, an amount of money that the lender said to be 50 gold coins and had undertaken the obligation to pay him back as soon as one of his ships returned to port — and presumably bring in the money earned during the trip. This sounds very much like a loan for business with hidden interest (since the exact amount of the debt seems to be questioned, in spite of the fact that there was a written document), but for some reason things changed and Christodoulos paid back his debt before time without recovering the contract and wanted to make sure that Luke would not receive for a second time the same amount of money.

The monastery of Patmos had obtained, since 1088, a tax exemption for one boat of 500 *modioi* to be used for the immediate needs of the monastery.[16] We do not know if these boats (or one of them) were taking

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[13] In MM, 82 the word is printed as *koutroubin*, which means a small clay recepient; *koutzourin* means "with cut off tail", the same thing as *kountoura*, a kind of ship attested in Dalmatia and elsewhere; see Hélene Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la Mer*, Paris 1967, p. 417, n. 8.

[14] Secret will of Christodoulos, lines 46–47 of the original document.

[15] Kodikellos of Christodoulos, lines 42–46 of the original document

[16] Maria Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, "Τα πλοία της Μονής Πάτμου (11ος–13ος αι.)", *I.M. Αγίου Ιωάννου του Θεολόγου, 900 Χρόνια Ιστορικής Μαρτυρίας*, *Acts of an International Symposium, Patmos 22–24 September 1988*, Athens 1989, pp. 93–114.

advantage of this exemption. What is clear though, is that the operation was much bigger than a simple effort to cheat over a fiscal privilege — it was a big and almost professional operation that could possibly profit from the fiscal privilege but was not by any means motivated by such petty greed. In the rest of the archive of Patmos, the boats are mentioned only in official documents and in relation to the tax exemptions that they enjoyed. But there is no reason in my view to think that the successors of Christodoulos would not have continued similar operations.

In his will Christodoulos speaks repeatedly of his books. Not only does he explain their provenance and his title of property over them, but he also insists that he gives them all to his monastery according to a list that he had made and signed himself to be given to the person whom he wanted to be his successor. It is clear that in the eyes of the founder, the books constituted a major and valuable asset for his monastery.[17]

This was not just in connection with church services. Christodoulos had a vision for his monastery that went beyond a simple monastic institution for the rank and file. He expected it to become a pole of attraction for intellectuals. He wanted as successor (unsuccessfully, as it turned out, a relative, a Constantinopolitan, the patriarchal notary Theodosios *ho tou kastrisiou* — i.e. a man of considerable education. And he expected to educate some at least of his younger companions. This is how he addresses the secretary[18] of the monastery, who is about to leave him and go to Constantinople. I quote: "And you, my child Epiphanios the secretary, try to finish [your studies of] philosophy, before starting the eternal philosophy [i. e. the monastic life]. Do not abandon [your studies], but try also to teach [what you learn] to your uncle. In the name of God and in order that you get my blessing, you must make sure not to misplace and lose any chrysobull or other document of the archive and any book of the monastery etc."[19]

One has the impression that Epiphanios was inscribed in something that resembled a programme offered by a Constantinopolitan institution: had he anything to do with the *hypatos ton philosophon*, the teacher of philosophy of the highest possible level, who at that time was Theodore Smyrnaios?[20] Or was he frequenting the school of secretaries (*didaskaleion ton grammatikon*) mentioned by Anna Komnene?[21] The first hypothesis seems to me more realistic and much more charming. In any case, Epiphanios was expected to finish his studies and then become a monk in Patmos (the word *philosophia*, accompanied by the adjective eternal, has here its second common meaning, that of monastic life).[22] There is more: Epiphanios is also expected to teach to others what he learned in his studies in Constantinople. This is a very interesting point showing how high level learning, which was in principle available only in Constantinople, could spread in the provinces through intermediaries. It also shows that the library of the monastery was needed for uses other than the simple church readings.

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[17] Secret will: MM, 83 = lines 41–42 of the original document.

[18] *Grammatikos*; the term may mean the "secretary" or the "teacher". Du Cange, *Glossarium*, p. 265; P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe s. byzantin*, Paris 1977, pp. 233–234; idem, *Le premier humanisme byzantin*, Paris 1971, p. 88, 100, 146. The first seems to me more likely because the person in question is still a student and serves the monastery by keeping the archive and the library.

[19] Appendix to the will : MM, 86 = lines 11–22 of the original document.

[20] *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantum* III, p. 2044.

We do not know whether Epiphanios ever returned to Patmos and what he did. But we know that before the turn of the century, Patmos had an abbot, Joseph Iasites, who was young, very well educated and came from a wealthy milieu, if we can judge from the books and precious vessels that he left to the monastery. Iasites was very young when he undertook the leadership of the monastery. There is no way of saying whether he was or not the same person as Epiphanios, but we know for certain that Joseph was also of a high intellectual level and that he could possibly be an important user of the monastic library. In any case, his name is mentioned in our next document that gives us information concerning the library.[23] It is a small piece of paper that survived to our days for reasons that only the Almighty could guess — as it lost all its importance very shortly after it was first written. Yet it gives us a snapshot of the functioning of the monastic library, and, more importantly, of an unexpected role that it played in the functioning of the monastery.

In October 1103, the administrator of the fortune of the monastery, the *oikonomos*, died. According to standard procedure, the librarian of the monastery went to his cell and noted down all the books that he found therein – eleven books on parchment and only one, a psalter, on paper: two Gospels, two books with the Epistles, two Psalters, two books of liturgy (*Oktoechos, Triodion*), the Apocalypse, orations of St Athanasios, and a small book containing "all the laws". At least three of these books are described to be "old items", while one is said to by luxuriously bound.

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[21] Cf. Lemerle, *Cinq études*, p. 234.

[22] *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantum* III, p. 1658.

[23] The document was discovered and published with a detailed commentary by Era Vranoussi, "Ὁ καθηγούμενος τῆς μονῆς Πάτμου Ἰωσὴφ Ἰασίτης καὶ ἡ ἀρχαιότερη ἀναγραφὴ χειρογράφων τῆς μονῆς", *Deltion tes Christianikes Archaiologikes Hetaireias* 4/4 (1964) pp. 345–352.

These books certainly did not come from the common library: no one would ever borrow double copies of the same book. They obviously belonged to the deceased; he may have brought them with him when he entered orders, or he may then have inherited them from relatives or otherwise acquired them. In theory, according to the regulation of Christodoulos, no monk of Patmos was allowed to possess anything of his own.[24] One has to admit that this prohibition was not respected as far as books were concerned, no doubt because of the special status that books ever have had in literate societies. On the other hand it is clear that whatever was found in the possession of a deceased brother automatically became property of the monastery — and this process is described in the first part of the small document that we are talking about.

The second part of the document is even more interesting. I quote:[25] "I received more books from the abbot, the monk and priest Joseph Iasites, against the debt of 50 gold coins of Gregory [towards the monastery]." There follows a list of eleven parchment books containing theological homilies, and commentaries, liturgical texts and Lives of Saints. The contents of this small library point towards a monastic owner, who having contracted a debt towards the monastery, was obliged to deliver a number of his books as collateral. This was a rather common phenomenon: for example, in 1052, one book valued at 24 *nomismata*, was given as partial collateral for a debt of 252 *nomismata*;[26] or the will of Skaranos in thirteenth-century Ormylia, who had given nine parchment books as collateral for a debt of 10 *nomismata*.[27] The interesting thing in the present case is the procedure: the abbot lends the money and receives the collateral, which he then turns over to his librarian — in other words the books were put together with the rest of the monastery's holdings and, the description not being very detailed, could well be mixed up and lost within the total of the books of the monastery.

As far as the value of the books is concerned, they are obviously undervalued, as would be expected in any case of collateral, given that the evaluation is made by the person granting the loan. The attested prices of parchment books in the eleventh and twelfth centuries could go up to 26 *nomismata*;[28] here the average price would be *ca* 4.5 *nomismata*. Consequently the monastery was taking good precautions when lending its money out. Also, the library was seen as a major asset of the monastery, an asset that played an important role in its economic activities some of which were unexpectedly complicated and important. An asset has also to be protected. The abbot himself in his will gives a detailed list of the books that he hands over to his successor — and this is done with much more care than for cash, which was undoubtedly limited. But protection of the monastery's assets meant among other things making sure that they would not be taken by the various greedy men, pirates or government officials, who each in his own way tried to loot the institution.

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[24] Hypotyposis, MM, 69, 75 = lines 713–714, 1156–1169 of the original document.

[25] Line 4 of the original document.

[26] Fl. Evangelatou-Notara, *Σημειώματα ἑλληνικῶν κωδίκων ὡς πηγὴ διὰ τὴν ἔρευναν τοῦ οἰκονομικοῦ καὶ κοινωνικοῦ ϐίου τοῦ Βυζαντίου*, Athens 1982, p. 159, no. 185.

[27] J. Bompaire, *Actes de Xéropotamou*, Paris 1964, no. 9, lines 59–60.

In the twelfth century, Patmos suffered much from the raids of pirates. We know about them thanks to the will of abbot Theoktistos (1157)[29] and to the *Enkomion* of Christodoulos written by the monk Theodosios in the 1190s.[30] Both the above sources mention first a party of Spanish Arabs who besieged the monastery and left only after receiving a substantial amount of money. Then Theoktistos mentions a certain Ἰεφφραί, otherwise unknown but with a name that sounds very much like Geoffrey; English pirates (from the Ὠκεανίτιδας islands) are also mentioned in the *Enkomion* of Theodosios, together with Italians, French and Sicilians, and thus our hypothesis about the origin of Ieffrai may be retained.[31] But they all left without receiving anything more than a payoff, even the Norman fleet from Sicily that taxed the islands of the Aegean in the late 1180s. After all, the monastery, with its fortifications, was a reasonably safe place that could not be stormed by a simple assault; as the pirates did not have the capability of mounting a long siege, the monastery could offer its services to individuals who had money to deposit.

We learn this for this early period quite by chance. In this same will, abbot Theoktistos mentions the looting of the monastery by Byzantine officials. He speaks of the tax collector of Samos, a certain Pegonites, who is known to us from other documents in the archive for his ruthless levies.[32] The abbot is trying to show that he himself is not responsible for any loss of property of the monastery. I quote:[33] "As far as the deposit of Straboromanos is concerned, i.e. the 70 pounds of gold and the 8 other pounds of his men, who are called Botanioi, it is known to all that Pegonites, the tax collector of Samos, obtained an imperial order, came here and took it all, not leaving anything to the monastery." Straboromanos is a well-known name of a Byzantine aristocratic family,[34] a member of which, otherwise unidentifiable, deposited for safekeeping in the monastery 70 pounds of gold, i.e. approximately 23 kg of gold. That was the deposit of the *archon*. His men, called Botanioi,[35] who had also some extra gold to put in a safe place, added to it another 8 pounds. In other words, the monastery of Patmos acted in this context as a bank receiving deposits for safe keeping. And this was done officially and was an activity considered legal by the state, which had to proceed with a virtual confiscation in order to appropriate that money. In other words, we see that Patmos already in the twelfth century acted in a way that is better known for monasteries of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[36] We do not know what was the benefit to the monastery from this operation, but we may assume that such a benefit existed.

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[28] See V. Kravari, "Note sur le prix des manuscrits (IXe–XVe siècle)", *Hommes et richesses dans l'empire byzantin, VIIIe–XVe siècle* II, Paris 1991, pp. 375–384.

[29] MM, 107 = lines 29–32 of the original document.

[30] *Ἀκολουθία ἱερὰ τοῦ ὁσίου καὶ θεοφόρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Χριστοδούλου*.... ed. Kyrillos Boines, Athens 1884, p. 177, para. 11. For the *Enkomion*, its author and date, see Vranoussi, *op. cit.*, *supra* note 5, p. 67ff.

[31] Vranoussi, *Eggrapha A*, *75 wonders whether Ieffrai could not be identical with the Genoese Gafforio, mentioned in 1196/7; this hypothesis has to be dismissed for obvious chronological reasons. But Ieffrai could also be a Catalan or French name.

The monks constantly complained that nothing is left in their monastery, that they are poor. In fact, what they meant was that they did not have any substantial amount of cash of their own. Abbot Theoktistos declares that the only cash that he had in 1157 was 202 *chichata* and 6 *trikephala nomismata*[37] — a ridiculously small amount of money for a big operation like Patmos. But he does not mention if there were other deposits in his monastery and he completely ignores the existence of other precious items kept in the church, in the skevophylakion or in the library, as if these items were completely deprived of real value. Yet we have seen that the monks were well aware of their value as assets.

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[32] Vranoussi, *Eggrapha A.*, no. 20.

[33] MM, 107 = lines 32–34 of the original document.

[34] For the family see P. Gautier, "Le dossier d'un haut fonctionnaire d'Alexis Ier Comnène", *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* 23 (1965) pp. 168–204; cf. *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* III, p. 1961–1962. We know of a certain John Straboromanos who was Duke of Crete in the mid-12th century and had dealings with the monastery but there is no way of saying that he is the one who made the deposit; see D. Tsougarakis, *The Life of Leontios Patriarch of Jerusalem*, Leiden–New York–Köln 1993, p. 179.

[35] This name may be significant because it may show a clientele relationship going back a long time; we know (cf. B. Skoulatos, *Les personnages byzantins de l'Alexiade*, Louvain 1980, pp. 282–283) that the earliest known Straboromanos of the XIth c., named Romanos, was a relative and close friend of emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1078–1081), who came from a village called Botania (*The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* I, p. 314) – no doubt the same village that gave the name to the depositors of Patmos.

[36] In the 14th and 15th centuries monasteries are known to have served as secure places for deposits and to have engaged in more complicated operations; see E.A. Zachariadou, "A safe and holy Mountain: early Ottoman Athos", *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism*, ed. A. Bryer and M. Cunningham, London 1996, pp. 127–132; A. Laiou, "Economic activities of Vatopedi in the fourteenth century", *Ιεράά Μονή Βατοπεδίου, Ιστορία και Τέχνη*, Athens 1999, pp. 55–72.

The last document that I am going to talk about is the detailed catalogue of the treasures of the monastery of Patmos in September 1200. It is a long scroll, named *kodex*, and containing the list of the icons, of the relics, of the precious vessels and silks, and of all the books, the last being divided into three categories: books on parchment with bindings, books on parchment without bindings and books on paper, a total of more than three hundred items. The books mentioned in this list have indications concerning their origin — and thus we know that some had belonged to the monastery since the time of Christodoulos or of Joseph Iasites. Some others are easily identifiable with objects that still exist in the monastery. One has the impression that losses in goods were the result of time and neglect (which is endemic) more than of thieves and brigands (against whom the monastery was prepared to defend itself). This list contains a series of additions which are of utmost importance for our purposes. Some concern items that had been added to the skevophylakion or the library, coming mostly from donations — the name of the donor is sometimes mentioned. Some come from Crete, the island of origin of the *hegoumenos* in 1200. Also we have two lists of books that have been loaned: they are written on the verso of the document.[38] These lists show another aspect of the usage of a medieval library.

Who received these books? First of all monks and dependencies of the monastery, all situated in the neighbourhood of Patmos or in the neighbourhood of properties of the monastery: a hermit in Kalymnos, a monk in Strovilos, the metochion of Kea, the metochion of Leros, the metochion of Pyrgos in the Meander delta, the metochion of Phygella, the metochion of

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[37] MM, 108 = line 36 of the original document.

[38] First published by Ch. Diehl, "Le trésor et la bibliothèque de Patmos au commencement du XIIIe siècle", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 1 (1892) pp. 488–525; latest diplomatic edition in two parts by Ch. Astruc, "L'inventaire dressé en septembre 1200 du trésor et de la bibliothèque de Patmos. Edition diplomatique", *Travaux et Mémoires* 8 (1981) pp. 15–30, and "Les listes de prêts figurant au verso de l'inventaire du trésor de la bibliothèque de Patmos dressé en septembre 1200", *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994) pp. 495–499.

Kos, the monastery of St Merkourios in Miletus (Palatia), the metochion of Psychron, the exact location of which escapes me.

There are, however, more significant recipients. The *sebastos kyr* Sabas, no doubt Sabas Asidenos, who held the fortified city of Sampson (ancient Priene, now Samsun dağ) as an independent ruler who would not recognize the authority of Theodore Laskaris after 1204, but who as his second marriage later married a relative of the Nicean emperor and received the higher title of *sebastokrator*.[39] He borrowed a *klimax paradeisou*, that is a treatise showing the steps that a monk must follow in order to win the eternal kingdom; he also borrowed a life of St Andrew the Fool, a medieval novel describing life in Constantinople in pietistic spirit. Sabas' mother-in-law was also an outside reader. She borrowed the *Evergetinos*, another monastic handbook of Constantinopolitan origin. A local noble and his family were thus among the friends of the monastery. Other readers are less well known to us but also belonged to local elites, since they were interested in borrowing books. The father of monk Maxinos in Crete, a certain Kanavis, one Provatas and a priest called Bileles on the neighbouring island of Samos; the brother of Pissites in Miletus, a name evoking the local elite, where many landowners and members of the local clergy bore this name.[40]

A certain George Exotrochos borrowed a psalter. We can place this man in context: in 1197, a certain Constantine Exotrochos, a wealthy Cretan shepherd who was certainly able to write his own name without spelling mistakes, made a considerable donation of cash and 400 sheeps and goats to the monastery of Patmos, with the hope that one day he might join, if he so wished, the congregation.[41] Or one Manuel Exotrochos who assumed public officer in western Asia Minor in 1221 or 1236, while another (?) lived in Smyrna in 1234.[42]

The notices on the Patmos list cover a small number of cases and a limited time; but they show a direction. They show that the monastery was using its library not only to equip its dependencies (which is normal and to be expected and which gave the monastery the reputation of a good owner of oratories so it could consequently eventually attract donations of such institutions) but also as an asset to make friends and to serve its friends: the monks selected the readers of their library and attracted them to act in a way that would benefit the monastery.

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[39] Cf. M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile*, Oxford 1975, p. 61 (with bibliography).

[40] See, for example, MM, 153.

[41] See MM, 133–136.

[42] Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *Eggrapha B*, p. 151, no.62.

From the above scattered information, one may draw some conclusions: The monastery of Patmos considered in the period of 1088–1200 on the basis of its own archive, appears not only as a centre of monastic meditation and learning, but also as a dynamic and complicated economic institution — with a library playing its own part.

- The monastery is an important agricultural enterprise, with scattered and diversified real estate;
- The monastery can provide the manpower to develop abandoned lands and to attract and assimilate other smaller monasteries;
- The monastery benefits from fiscal privileges granted by the State but pays back in economic development and fiscal proceeds;
- The monastery accumulates capital and finances the development of its holdings and their region;
- The monastery soon owns a small fleet of commercial ships, some of which bring in an important revenue: certainly the revenue of a shipowner, if not the revenue of a businessman;
- The monastery, with its strong fortifications, provides security to its region and can serve as a deposit bank;
- The monastery is somehow in the business of lending money and for this it receives securities;
- In all these operations, an important part is played by books, which are essential for the function of monks, but which are also used as a means of pleasing influential friends of the institution;
- Books and monks also serve in promoting culture in remote areas.

Monks were doing all this while being utterly dedicated to worship. Weren't they complicated?

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VIII

SILK TRADE AND PRODUCTION IN BYZANTIUM FROM THE SIXTH TO THE NINTH CENTURY: THE SEALS OF KOMMERKIARIOI

The silk trade in late antiquity has always been seen by modern historians as if surrounded by a romantic aura. The trip to China was long, dangerous, and expensive since the Persians imposed increasingly heavy taxes upon those who crossed their territory—not to speak of the special difficulties that arose when Persia and the Roman Empire were at war. In Emperor Justinian's time (527–65) Byzantium tried desperately to establish direct contacts with China through the route of the Russian steppes, starting from the Crimea; but these attempts never resulted in any sizable success. Persia and its merchants as intermediaries thus remained a decisive factor for the sixth-century silk trade, especially when it had been decreed that Byzantine merchants were not allowed to trade beyond the empire's eastern frontier.[1]

Yet Byzantium remained the only potential customer for silk west of Persia: hence its repeated attempts to bring prices down by establishing direct state control over the buying of silk. In the fourth century we hear of an official, the *comes commerciorum*, that is, the head of the market towns (*commercia*) along the frontier; beyond his presumed general supervision over foreign trade, he was the only person in the empire authorized to buy silk from foreign merchants. It is clear that this official's bargaining power was considerable since, in theory at least, he could refuse to make any purchase if he judged that the prices asked by the Persians were too high. Moreover, it can be surmised that his personal income did not depend on the silk trade. But demand for silk in Byzantium was very strong, and merchants as well as their customers were ready to pay almost any price for this luxury product which was also an important indicator of social status. Consequently I would imagine the comes commerciorum as a public official trying to impose, for the state's benefit, moderate prices on silk.[2]

This would be the clearest case of state intervention in the economic process. It was not the only one. At the same time legislation was introduced forbidding ordinary citizens to wear high-quality silk, especially purple silk, which was thus becoming an item reserved for the emperor, his family, and their entourage.[3] But these restrictions were only partly respected, so that new legislation and new policing became necessary: Justinian tried to fix mandatory low prices for silk garments inside the empire, with the hope that this would discourage illegal imports of silk and result in a boycott that would hurt the Persian economy. His measure

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[1] See G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (Oxford, 1956), 68–69 and note 1 (bibliography). The basic study for Byzantine silk remains the one by R. S. Lopez, "Silk Industry and Trade in the Byzantine Empire," *Speculum* 20 (1945), 1–42 (hereafter Lopez, "Silk"). Important contributions concerning Roman (and late Roman-early Byzantine) trade with China, including trade in silk, are to be found in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, ed. Hildergard Temporini and W. Haase, II, Prinzipat, 9,2 (Berlin-New York, 1978): J. Ferguson, M. Keynes, "China and Rome" (pp. 581–603); M. G. Raschke, "New Studies in Roman Commerce with the East" (pp. 604–1361). See also H. Miyakawa/Zama and A. Kollautz, "Ein Dokument zum Fernhandel zwischen Byzanz und China zur Zeit Theophylakts," *BZ* 77 (1984), 6–19.

[2] *CI* IV.40.2. On the comites commerciorum (one for Oriens and Egypt, another for Illyricum and a third for Moesia and Pontos) see A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1964), II, 826 and III, 272 note 7.

[3] Lopez, "Silk," 10 ff. This legislation was not uniformly applied throughout the centuries, yet it remained valid in its essence. One has to wait until the end of the 9th century to find the first imperial decision tending partially to suppress these restrictions: Leo VI, in his Novella 80, authorized the free sale to private individuals of "pieces" of purple cloth: P. Noailles and A. Dain, *Les novelles de Léon VI le Sage* (Paris, 1944), 272–75.

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killed business in Byzantium and resulted in the creation of an internal black market that had to be policed.[4] But, in the meantime, a great breakthrough came about: in the reign of Justinian himself, and (according to the legend reported by Procopius) thanks to some Indian monks, the Byzantines learned how to produce silk—a Chinese secret up to then—and started growing their own silkworms.[5] Byzantine silk production, which became one of the major elements of the economic force of the empire, took its first steps.

It is obvious that silk imports from the East did not stop—in fact, they never stopped completely. Thus it is not impossible to date in the reign of Justinian or one of his successors another law which shows a greater desire for the acquisition of oriental silk: a ceiling price of 15 nomismata for the sale of one pound of raw silk inside the empire is established, and purchases from the barbarians are authorized only for imperial officials and for no one else.[6] These imperial officials are now called, in Greek, *kommerkiarioi* and seem to have approximately the same powers as the comites commerciorum, with one difference: the latter had been officials working for the financial benefit of the state, while the new kommerkiarioi are state officials making profits for themselves as well as for the state. In the fifth-century law concerning the comes commerciorum it is clearly stated that if any private citizen bought silk directly from the barbarians, he would be punished by perpetual exile and by confiscation of his property;[7] in the sixth-century law concerning the kommerkiarioi the same stipulations are repeated with the difference that here it is stated that the illegally acquired silk could go to the kommerkiarios[8] rather than to the fisc which received the rest of the culprit's goods—a statement that clearly shows that the kommerkiarios was also carrying on his own private business and had to receive compensation for any lost profit, undoubtedly because he was granted a monopoly over silk imports.

What is a kommerkiarios? The term first appears around the year 500 during the reign of Emperor Anastasios (491–518): we hear of a former kommerkiarios who lived in Antioch and was appointed comes Orientis; and we learn that the kommerkiarios (without any geographical precision, as if the job was unique in the empire) was obliged to pay part of the salary of the doux of Mesopotamia.[9] In the early seventh century we meet a kommerkiarios of Tyre who was unjustly accused of causing the goods of the kommerkion to become dilapidated.[10] In all three cases we have important persons living in the East and disposing of money and goods belonging to the state. I do not think that these texts warrant the hypothesis that the kommerkiarioi were duty collectors (as they will become later); on the contrary, the mention of the "goods" of the kommerkion invites us to consider them as carrying on trade on behalf of the state. Now, if we remember that, as we have seen, they also seem to have had a personal stake in this business, we have to conclude that most probably already in the sixth century they farmed their office (that is, the exclusive right to buy silk from foreigners and sell it in the interior), out of the exercise of which they made profits and, consequently, were also liable to make payments for the account of the state, obviously from the part of the profits that went to the state.[11] What is important and has to be stressed here is that they are yet few in number: normally one person at a time, maybe two or three in case of business associations (see below), and only for limited periods of time (no lifelong appointments). The kommerkiarios of the early sixth century does not seem to have any functions other than those of the comes commerciorum that preceded him.[12] One may thus wonder whether the term *kommerkiarios* is not simply a demotic Greek translation of the official Latin title—a translation that prevailed when the practice of farming out this office started to become general and its jurisdiction centered on the silk trade.

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[4] Procopius, *Secret History*, 25 (ed. Haury, Teubner, III, 155 ff): Justinian authorized the sale of silk dresses (ἐσθῆτος) at a maximum price of eight gold coins a pound (τὴν λίτραν); silk, being particularly precious, was sold by weight even when made into cloth or garments, presumably with the possibility for increasing its price in order to take into consideration any extra work (such as embroideries, etc.). My interpretation of this passage differs from that proposed by various scholars, especially by Lopez, "Silk," 11, who considers the eight nomismata as a ceiling price for the acquisition of raw silk from foreign merchants, in spite of the fact that Procopius speaks of ἐσθῆτες sold in Constantinople and mentions the "tithes" (δεκατευτήρια) that had to be paid on this merchandise inside the empire (undoubtedly the new taxes of Abydos, instituted by Justinian and mentioned by Procopius in the previous pages).

[5] Procopius, *De Bello Gothico*, IV, 17 (ed. Haury, II, 576–577).

[6] The law was first published from cod. Bodleianus 3399, fol. 58, by Zachariae in a footnote of his Ἀνέκδοτα; it was then republished by the same author with a long and masterly commentary in "Eine Verordnung Justinian's über den Seidenhandel aus den Jahren 540–547," *Mémoires de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de St.-Pétersbourg*, ser. 8, vol. 9, no. 6 (1865), rpr. in K. E. Zachariae von Lingenthal, *Kleine Schriften zur römischen und byzantinischen Recht*, I (Leipzig, 1973), 525–43. It is now included, as no. 154, in the collections of Justinian's Novellae (Imp. Iustiniani PP.A., *Novellae*, ed. C. E. Zachariae von Lingenthal, II, Leipzig, 1881, 293; cf. *CIC* III, 798, no. 5). It was attributed to Justinian by Zachariae; to one of his successors by Lopez, "Silk," 13; again to Justinian by E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, I (Paris-Brussels-Amsterdam, 1949), 770 ff, 843–45. I do not think that a clear opinion can be expressed as to the date and attribution of this novella, and, in any case, the date does not make any difference as far as my argument is concerned. What seems to me very probable, though, is that the novella, which concerns raw silk at the frontier with a ceiling price of 15 nom., must be later than the measures of Justinian described by Procopius, which concern garments sold in Constantinople for a ceiling price of 8 nom. (cf. above, note 4).

[7] *CI* IV.63.6.

[8] The kommerkiarios "can" (δύναται) take the merchandise away from the merchant. Of course, it is not a question here of "selective punishment" as Lopez ("Silk," 13 note 2) understood it. The legislator makes it clear that while all property of the transgressor will be confiscated, according to preexisting law, the kommerkiarios "can"—but not necessarily "will"—claim the illegally imported silk (which otherwise would go to the state). One may suppose that the kommerkiarios, being a businessman himself, was not necessarily eager to claim part of the confiscated property of another businessman, a "colleague," the more so as the mandate of kommerkiarios was, we shall see, held on an annual basis.

[9] This particular treatment of the military commander of Mesopotamia has created a precedent, which survived till the 9th century; see the more recent publication on this subject by W. Brandes, "Überlegungen zur Vorgeschichte des Thema Mesopotamien," *BSl* 44/2 (1983), 171–77.

[10] All three texts are quoted and discussed by Hélène Antoniadis-Bibicou, *Recherches sur les douanes à Byzance* (Paris, 1963), 157 ff (hereafter Bibicou, *Douanes*), but her conclusions are different from mine. A fourth text, mentioned on p. 158 note 1, does not necessarily refer to a kommerkiarios.

This textual information is poor. But we have another, very important source: the lead seals of kommerkiarioi, preserved in large numbers and constituting a special group, easy to recognize, because an approximate or even a precise date can be attributed to each one of them. This peculiarity has long attracted the attention of scholars, but a sound chronology of these seals was not proposed until 1972, together with the publication of large quantities of new material.[13]

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[11] The novella *peri metaxes* says that the kommerkiarioi should "negotiate" (πραγματεύεσθαι) with the barbarians for the silk at 15 nom. a pound and "resell" it (μεταπωλεῖν) to the metaxarioi or to others "not for more" (οὐ πλέον). This phrase has been understood by some scholars (Stein, Bibicou) as indicating that the kommerkiarios was not allowed to make any profit from the operation since he had to sell silk at the price at which he bought it; and it has served them as an argument for supposing that he must have been collecting the import and circulation tax (which would have been his only revenue). But this hypothesis, not supported by the text (or by any other text of that period) presents the following contradiction: if the kommerkiarios added to the merchandise the circulation tax, its selling price would also be higher than its purchase price. I think that the text would be better understood if one stresses the "intended" distinction between negotiating and reselling, between πραγματεύεσθαι and μεταπωλεῖν. The kommerkiarios should negotiate with the idea that the price of raw silk should not be higher than 15 nom. a pound when he resold it to the Byzantine merchants. But no one says that the price he would pay to the Persians had to be that high: the lower the purchase price, the larger would be his margin of profit. Moreover, no one says that this purchase price was effectively paid in gold (the export of which was forbidden); the verb πραγματεύεσθαι might well be understood as hinting that the gold coins were an account money, serving as common denominator for establishing the value of the merchandise that changed hands. Consequently one may imagine a situation in which the kommerkiarios, having made a good bargain on the merchandise that he was exporting, might agree to exchange it for a "nominal" price of 15 nom., resell it for 15 nom., and still make a profit (the monetary economy is automatically established once the merchandise is inside the empire). This procedure also explains why a punishment is foreseen for the kommerkiarios only if he sells at a high price, not if he buys at such a price.

[12] This point of view, contested by Bibicou, *Douanes* (followed by J. Nesbitt, in *DOP* 31 [1977], 115 note 20), had been proposed by G. Millet, "Sur les sceaux des commerciaires byzantins," *Mélanges G. Schlumberger*, II (Paris, 1924), 303–27 (hereafter Millet, "Commerciaires"). See also Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 296, 862, 869. The control of eastern trade in luxury items is still considered to belong to the kommerkiarios/telones in a 10th-century text (*Fontes minores* [Frankfurt, 1976], I, 90, cf. 87), which reproduces a passage of the *Digesta* (39.4.16.7).

A new theory concerning the meaning of the early kommerkiarioi (those who are associated with an apotheke) has been proposed by M. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy* (Cambridge, 1985), 624, 626–34, 654–62. Hendy made wide use of the new sigillographic materials (cf. below, note 13); accepted Nesbitt's understanding of the seals, that is, that the kommerkiarioi were duty collectors (with this I partly disagree) and were farming out their jobs (I very much agree); connected the apotheke with the Muslim institution known as *al-gaysariyya* and indicating a building "generally involving the production and sale of luxury goods" (I agree with this point, with some important nuances that will be discussed below); but related the kommerkiarioi of the apotheke with the army and represented them as "quartermasters general" selling weapons to soldiers at the time of mobilizations. On this last point I disagree because: (a) it is not supported by any text; (b) it is in contradiction with the fact that some kommerkiarioi exercise, sometimes simultaneously, the function of archon tou blattiou (cf. below, p. 50); (c) the argument presented, that the kommerkiarioi appear in provinces threatened by enemies—and thus likely to be mobilized—seems particularly weak since it is based on, at best, circumstantial evidence: in the 7th and 8th centuries all the provinces can be seen as somehow threatened; (d) on the contrary, we shall see below that the kommerkiarioi seem to flee the war zone (see note 77); (e) the argument based on the seals of the Slav *andrapoda* cannot hold because it is based on a forcibly twisted chronology of events, in spite of its being appropriately recorded by Theophanes (see below, 52 f).

[13] The basis for any further research on seals of kommerkiarioi is provided by G. Zacos and A. Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, I/1 (Basel, 1972), 129–363 (chap. 2: "Dated Byzantine Seals"), and I/3, 1592–1596 (supplement) (hereafter Zacos-Veglery). A previous attempt at classifying these seals was made by N. Likhačev, "Datirovannye vizantijskie pečati," *Izvestija Rossijskoj Akademii Istorii Materialjnoj Kultury* 3 (1927), 123–224, some of whose attributions have been revised by other scholars in scattered publications. A list of the seals of kommerkiarioi published before 1963 is provided by Bibicou, *Douanes*, 225–38, but it needs now to be revised according to the conclusions of Zacos-Veglery. An important supplement to the above material—a supplement that confirms the solidity of the basic principles of chronology proposed by Zacos-Veglery—is provided by the publication of similar seals from the museum of Carthage: Cécile Morrisson and W. Seibt, "Sceaux de commerciaires byzantins du VIIe siècle trouvés à Carthage," *RN* 24 (1982), 222–40.

Most Byzantine officials possessed a boulloterion, that is, a kind of iron pincers, the working ends of which were inscribed; if one introduced between them a blank lead roundel and struck on top of one of them with a hammer, he produced his own lead seal, used to validate correspondence, to close letters, and for the many other minor uses of a seal that one may imagine. This is true of the emperor himself, practically the only person in the empire to have his own effigy depicted on his seal; it is true for all other officials, from top to bottom, even for private individuals who decorated their seals with crosses, monograms, religious representations (such as portraits of saints), secular representations (such as animals), and, of course, with inscriptions indicating their own names, titles, and offices. Lead sealing was flourishing by the sixth century and became even more popular in those that followed.

We know of seventh- and eighth-century seals of kommerkiarioi belonging to this general category; some of them come from known officials, some do not.[14] It is obvious that these were the ones used for regular correspondence. But in the early period, from the sixth to the early ninth century, we have a different type of kommerkiarios' seal, which is exceptional from all points of view and was obviously intended for a use other than banal correspondence. What this use might have been is suggested by some of these seals that come from bales of merchandise, since on their reverse one can clearly see the imprint of burlap. Others, inscribed on both sides, could be used for closing sacks or boxes of merchandise, as well as for other purposes. These seals are preserved in considerable numbers.

Their main characteristic is that they have on the obverse the effigy of the emperor or emperors, depicted in a way very similar to that on imperial seals or coins. This similarity, undoubtedly due to the fact that these matrixes were, at least partly, carved by state coin-die engravers, allows us to identify the emperor depicted and attribute with certainty an approximate date to the seals; moreover, from 673/74 to 832/33 we find on them the indiction year (or years), which allows us to date them with precision.

The first question arises: what is the meaning of the representation of the emperor himself on these seals of kommerkiarioi? This feature, unique as far as seals of civil servants are concerned, has been attributed to the importance of these officials and their being appointed by the emperor.[15] This last point has already been contested,[16] and rightly so: all appointments to high administrative positions were made by the emperor to persons chosen by himself. Moreover, the argument about the importance of the office also seems weak: none of the kommerkiarioi known from these seals can be identified with any certainty with a known historical personage, while the seals of many well-known top officials of the empire belong to the common type and are never decorated with the imperial portrait.[17] Another explanation should be sought here.

The image of the emperor appears on his own seal and, at least in the sixth century, on seals of institutions belonging to the sovereign, such as the imperial hospice;[18] it also was depicted on the boundary markers of imperial properties.[19] In these cases its presence is easy to explain as that of an "identification card," marking what comes from or belongs to the ruler. But there is another use, much more widespread, and more interesting for our purposes: the imperial portrait (sometimes replaced by the imperial monogram)[20] was used on gold, silver, and copper coins and was seen not only as an authorization for the coin to circulate but also as a guarantee of the metal's fineness.[21] That this was the perception of the Byzantines can be seen from the fact that in the law stipulating that old gold coins could circulate together with the more recent ones, it is specified that they must bear the emperor's effigy (βασιλέως τύπον) and have the right weight: it was easy to check the weight; but the quality of the metal was guaranteed only by the emperor's portrait.[22] The same portrait, here too sometimes replaced by the imperial monogram, and accompanied by those of public servants, appears in the silver stamps used by the Byzantine state in the sixth and seventh centuries to guarantee the quality of the metal.[23]

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[14] E.g., Zacos-Veglery, nos. 968, 1013, 1032, 1811, 1880, 2077A, 2182. The first four of these seals may have belonged to kommerkiarioi also known from dated seals (ibid., pp. 145, 146, 151, 155; tables 1, 3, 7, 10). A better documented case is to be found in N. Oikonomides, *A Collection of Dated Byzantine Lead Seals* (Washington, D.C., 1986) (hereafter *Dated Seals*), nos. 19, 20.

[15] Millet, "Commerciaires," 310.

[16] Bibicou, *Douanes*, 170.

[17] Take, for example, the 7th- and 8th-century seals of Byzantine exarchs of Ravenna, supreme commanders in Italy, exercising simultaneously the military and civil administration of the peninsula: e.g., V. Laurent, *Les sceaux byzantins du médailler Vatican* (Vatican City, 1962), 99–105.

[18] Zacos-Veglery, no. 129.

[19] Under Emperor Tiberios, 578–82; Zepos, *Jus*, I (Athens, 1931), 20 = F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches*, I (Munich-Berlin, 1924), no. 67. The same idea reappears in the 13th century: F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca*, IV (Vienna, 1871), 162. Cf. also G. Zacos, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, II (Berne, 1984), 130–31.

[20] P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coins* (London, 1982), 33.

[21] Since antiquity the fineness of the coin's metal was guaranteed by the image and the inscription struck on it by the state: R. Göbl, *Antike Numismatik*, I (Munich, 1978), 29, 48.

Silk was also a very precious item. We know not only that its price was high, but also that it was an item in which wealthy individuals might invest in order to speculate.[24] We also know that persons who borrowed silk were eventually required to pay interest.[25] After all, don't we know that silk was to become a major source of revenue for the Byzantine state?[26] Wasn't there any guarantee of its quality?

We have seen that the kommerkiarioi were dealing in silk and that some of their seals with the imperial effigy were undoubtedly used for bales of merchandise. I suggest that these seals served to guarantee the quality of that precious material and to declare that its sale was properly authorized, while a different, common type of seal was used for regular correspondence. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that all other public officials who had seals with the imperial effigy were also dealing in precious items: the sakellarioi of Africa, who were in charge of the mint of Carthage;[27] the archontes of the blattion, that is, the officials in Constantinople who held the monopoly on the production and sale of some dyes, especially purple ones, and of high-quality textiles colored with them (see below); an official of the late seventh century who took charge of a "giant sale" of slaves for the profit of the emperor (see Appendix 2); and some general logothetes (tax collectors) of the late seventh and early eighth centuries, who seem to have been assimilated to kommerkiarioi (see below, p. 46).

We may now return to the preserved seals of kommerkiarioi with this idea in mind. What do we find?

(a) They start appearing in the late sixth century; the earliest preserved one may have belonged to a certain Magnos the Syrian, an influential minister of Justin II (565–78), who was at the same time "curator," that is, "administrator," "trustee," of imperial estates (*oikos*). The extant seals belonged, according to their inscriptions, to "the imperial estate, [which is] under Magnos, gloriosissimus curator kommerkiarios of Theoupolis" (i.e., Antioch).[28] It is clear that we are at the beginnings of an institution; the functions of kommerkiarios seem to be attached to the administration of an imperial estate—or, rather, we have one person who has farmed out the exploitation of the estate as well as the functions of kommerkiarios.[29] In any case, the seat of this kommerkiarios is Antioch, a large city close to the eastern frontier with Persia and main outlet of the silk route from Central Asia.

(b) From this same region comes a series of other seals which mention the place name Tyre,[30] a well-known center of production of silk textiles (together with Beirut).[31] Most of these seals date from the late sixth or very early seventh century, and in any case none of them can be placed after 638, when Tyre was definitely conquered by the Arabs—and, most probably, none is later than the conquest of Phoinike by the Persians in 613. Already in this early period one finds cases of two or three persons who have a common seal of kommerkiarioi, thus showing that they were business partners who had farmed out the office.

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[22] Basilics 54.18.1. Reference to this law is also made by John Skylitzes, ed. Thurn, 275 (χαϱαϰτῆϱα βασιλέως), and John Zonaras, ed. Bonn, 507 (βασιλιϰὸν ἐϰτύπωμα). It is interesting to note that the author of the Basilics, following the prescriptions of Novella 52 of Leo VI, who mentions the necessity of an "unchanged appearance" (ἀπαϱαποίητον τὴν μοϱφὴν: P. Noailles and A. Dain, *Les novelles de Léon VI le Sage* [Paris, 1944], 198–201), reactivated here a law of Emperors Valentinian and Valens (364–75), reproduced in *CI* 11.11.1 ("Solidos veterum principum veneratione formatos"). The βασιλιϰὸς χαϱαϰτὴϱ makes it impossible for one to refuse a coin: Book of the Eparch, 3, 3; 9, 5; 10, 4; 11, 9; 13,2.

[23] Erica Cruikshank Dodd, *Byzantine Silver Stamps* (Washington, D.C., 1961), 5–6; cf. idem, "Byzantine Silver Stamps: Supplement I," *DOP* 18 (1964), 239–48; and "Supplement II," *DOP* 22 (1968), 143–49.

[24] Book of the Eparch, 6, 10 and 7, 1.

[25] Basilics 23.3.73.

[26] One does not need to insist on the economic importance of Byzantine silk exports all over the world. See, among others, the recent study of H. W. Haussig, "Der Seidenhandel über die Chazaren mit Byzanz und Skandinavien," *Les pays du nord et Byzance* (Uppsala, 1981), 187–93.

[27] The problem of the African sakellarioi has been raised and partially answered by Morrisson-Seibt, "Sceaux de commerciaires," 236–38. But no explanation has been proposed for the imperial effigy that appears on the African seals, while those of the same officials acting in Constantinople are covered with inscriptions only. Perhaps this could be related to the fact that in Africa they were acting as real lieutenants of the emperor, possibly after having farmed out their duties in the province, while in Constantinople they were acting as civil servants.

[28] Zacos-Veglery, nos. 130–130 bis, and p. 215 (biographical and bibliographical information about Magnos). See also D. Feissel, "Magnus, Mégas et les curateurs des maisons divines de Justin II à Maurice," *TM* 9 (1985), 465–76; and *Dated Seals*, no. 5.

[29] It must be noted that the expression ϰουϱάτωϱ ϰομμεϱϰιάϱιος (without ϰαὶ) of the seals, if taken literally, is awkward: it leaves the impression that ϰουϱάτωϱ may have been understood as a qualification of ϰομμεϱϰιάϱιος, or vice versa.

[30] List by Zacos-Veglery, 214.

[31] Cf., e.g., Procopius, *Anecdota*, 155.

(c) The place names mentioned on these very early seals are those of big cities, Antioch and Tyre, both closely related to the importation of eastern silk. On one seal we even find a precocious mention of the *apotheke* (warehouse) of Tyre, which we may consider the point of concentration and redistribution of the imported silk. I shall return later to the term *apotheke.*

The conclusions drawn from the early seals are in absolute conformity with the information provided by the texts mentioned above: a limited number of officials, concentrated in the east, Antioch and Tyre (centers of silk trade), who farmed their profitable jobs from the state and had the use of a warehouse. As the novella *peri metaxes* declares, they imported silk and then sold it (undoubtedly with some profit for themselves and for the state) to the craftsmen, who worked it. Their seals, stuck on bales or used to close packages, were part of the selling process and served as a guarantee of quality and as an authorization for the merchandise to circulate. In the eyes of seventh-century Byzantines, a kommerkiarios was a person with authority over silk garments (ὁ τῆς σηρικῆς ἄρχων ἐσθῆτος).[32]

Signs of change appear at the time of the great upheavals that characterize the early seventh century: while Syria and Phoinike are under Persian rule (613–27) an ἐνδοξότατος κομμερκιάριος named Theodore is mentioned among the five distinguished Constantinopolitans sent as envoys to the Avars in 626.[33] This is the first time that a kommerkiarios is attested at a distance from the silk route.

At the same time we find seals of kommerkiarioi without any geographic specification,[34] who seem to exercise some authority all over the empire, as far as Byzantine Africa, since many of their seals have been found in Carthage: a certain John, famosissimus (πανεύφημος), whose seals date from the early reign of Herakleios (between 615 and 629);[35] a certain Theodore gloriosissimus (ἐνδοξότατος) from approximately the same period (616–29, 629–32), who could be identical with the gloriosissimus Theodore of 626 and who, in 641/42, will issue seals with the titles gloriosissimus kommerkiarios of Africa; a certain Sergios (629–41), who will also acquire the dignity of gloriosissimus (in 641); and some anonymous ones.[36] Of course there is no way of proving beyond any doubt that these officials were not just local Carthaginian ones; but such a hypothesis is not likely, since we have a seal, dated between 641 and 654 and coming from Constantinople, on which Sergios and Theodore are jointly holding the post of kommerkiarioi (without geographic precision).[37]

But the vast majority of the seventh-century seals of kommerkiarioi also contain mention of one or more place names, names of provinces, sometimes names of cities. Their inscriptions usually occur in the following form: (a) name(s) and, eventually, honorific title(s) of the owner(s); (b) general kommerkiarios (or kommerkiarioi) of the warehouse (apotheke); (c) name of the city, of the province, or of several of them (up to five).

What is the warehouse (apotheke), which is always mentioned in the singular (even when two or more place names follow)? We have seen that it appears on a sixth-century seal of Tyre, and I interpreted it as a point of concentration and redistribution of imported silk. It appears also on some seals of the early seventh century and on all seals of kommerkiarioi that mention a place name and that date between 654/59 and 728/29. When we find the apotheke of a city (as occurs at times on early seals),[38] we may assume that it was a specific building in that city. But this is no longer the case when we have one apotheke of two or more cities (e.g., Koloneia and Kamacha[39] or Kerasous and Trapezous).[40] Moreover, the apotheke is very often defined by the name of one province or of many provinces, or of one or two provinces and one city

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[32] I am grateful to Mr. Bernard Flusin of I.R.H.T., Paris, for drawing my attention to the fact that George Pisides, who rewrote in 630 the Life of St. Anastasios Perses, used this expression in order to render in purist Greek the word κομμερκιάριος of his model. See A. Pertusi, "L'encomio di S. Anastasio martire persiano," *AB* 76 (1958), 54, 55; cf. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, 'Ανάλεκτα 'Ιεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας, 4 (St. Petersburg, 1897), 140–41.

[33] Chronicon Paschale, Bonn ed., I, 721.

[34] Cf. J. Ebersolt, "Sceaux byzantins du Musée de Constantinople," *RN* 18 (1914), 229; Zacos-Veglery, nos. 134–135, 137–138, 145, 148, 185.

[35] Morrisson-Seibt, "Sceaux de commerciaires," 226–28, nos. 1–2; the authors suggest the likely identification of this person with a John sakellarios, attested at about the same time. I wonder whether this same John, at a later date, would not have been the owner of the partly read seal mentioned (with bibliography) by Zacos-Veglery, 214, no. 6 (John endoxotatos apo hypaton, patrician, logothete . . .).

[36] Morrisson-Seibt, "Sceaux de commerciaires," 228–32. As far as Theodore is concerned, it should be added that he might have been identical with Theodore illustris and dioiketes, whose seal, incompletely read, has been dated "614 or later" (Zacos-Veglery, no. 131); Sergios could be identical with the owner of the seals of Zacos-Veglery, nos. 486, 2975. See also *Dated Seals,* nos. 8–13.

[37] Zacos-Veglery, no. 135.

[38] E.g., Zacos-Veglery, nos. 133(?), 150.

[39] Zacos-Veglery, nos. 203 (702/4), 217 (713/14).

[40] Zacos-Veglery, 181, table 29 (689/90 ff).

(usually situated inside or close to the province),[41] etc. The combinations are numerous, and sometimes surprising, in spite of the fact that all the above groupings are geographically coherent. For example, the two Cappadocias are usually mentioned together, as if they had a common warehouse; but in 691/92 the warehouse of Cappadocia I is mentioned separately, while Cappadocia II is coupled with neighboring Lykaonia.[42] Another example: the province of Hellespontos had its own apotheke (presumably at Abydos); yet this province is coupled with Constantinople in 695/96 and with Asia in 721/22, both of which had their own well-attested warehouses.[43] One is thus brought to the conclusion that the word *apotheke,* initially a specific building, soon acquired a second, "abstract" meaning designating an administrative unit with authority over territories (not ports or routes) of varying extent, defined usually by the name(s) of province(s) but also by the name(s) of cities or described by more complicated expressions (e.g., Honorias, Paphlagonia, and the littoral of Pontos down to Trebizond).[44] Inside the region covered by an administrative apotheke there could be one or several "real" warehouses serving the primary purpose of that kind of building, concentration and redistribution, under the supervision of the kommerkiarios responsible for the operation—an operation that could be much better controlled with the introduction of the custom of dating the seals precisely by inscribing on them the indiction:[45] this supplementary information, which survived without exception well into the ninth century, appears in 673/74, coinciding with the beginnings of the first siege of Constantinople by the Arabs.[46] One may wonder if this innovation should be related to the desperate efforts of Constantine IV to create a sound economic basis for his empire in order to thwart the ambitions of the caliphs.

Independently of the credibility of the above hypothesis, it is clear that the introduction of indiction dating meant tighter controls for the kommerkiarioi. We have seen what kind of officials they were in the sixth century, and I have pointed to indications showing that, already at that time, they might have been farming their duties. This general image becomes much clearer in the seventh century, as John Nesbitt first pointed out,[47] especially from the moment that seals begin to be dated by year. These are the main indications.

1. The same person or persons hold simultaneously many geographically incompatible apothekai.[48] This is impossible for government appointees, while it is very understandable for those that farmed their duties, who could be represented in the provinces by their personnel; consequently one has to imagine them as wealthy individuals at the head of powerful economic organizations. From the extant seals we know of individuals holding simultaneously two or three apothekai, but we find cases of up to seven such concessions held simultaneously by one person or association of persons. There are good reasons to suspect that a similar situation prevailed also before the introduction of indiction dating: we have seven different seals in many copies, concerning different provinces, but all belonging to Stephen patrikios and dating between the years 659 and 668; we have three different seals of different provinces but all belonging to Theodore apo hypaton and dating between 668 and 672.[49] Although not absolutely certain, it is highly probable that some of these mandates were simultaneous, as will happen in later times.

2. Several kommerkiarioi mandates are held jointly by two (even three) individuals, who have common seals. This appears already with the sixth-century kommerkiarioi of Tyre. It is clear that these are cases of business associates, the more so since these associations seem to have a certain stability over the years: take, for example, the cases of George patrikios and Theophylaktos (689–709), Mikkinas and Gregory, Synetos and Nicetas (710–15), etc.[50] Stability but not exclusivity: during

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[41] E.g., Koloneia, Kamacha, and Fourth Armenia; Lazike, Kerasous, Trapezous; Paphlagonia and Ionopolis; Isauria and Syllaion; Cilicia and Korykos; etc.

[42] Zacos-Veglery, 178–79, table 26.

[43] Zacos-Veglery, 165–67, 170–72, 176–77, tables 17, 19, 21.

[44] Likhačev, "Datirovannye," 165–66, no. 3. Cf. Zacos-Veglery, no. 2765.

[45] Likhačev, "Datirovannye," 176–77, no. 6, published a seal of Julian apo hypaton and general kommerkiarios of Crete for ind. 2 and 3 (688–90?); above the indiction figures one sees the enigmatic abbreviation B̄–T̊, which Likhačev interpreted as τοπάρχης and Zacos-Veglery, 241, as βασιλικὸν or δεύτερον and τέλος or τελώνιον, which makes more sense but is not justified paleographically. I am wondering whether this is not a geographic reference: (δεύτερος) τό(πος), indicating a second place of concentration for the merchandise. Cf. *Dated Seals,* no. 22.

[46] A. Stratos, "Siège ou blocus de Constantinople sous Constantin IV," *JÖB* 33 (1983), 89–107.

[47] In a paper delivered in 1976 at the Second Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, Madison, Wisconsin; the essential parts of this paper have been published: J. Nesbitt, "Double Names on Byzantine Lead Seals," *DOP* 31 (1977), 115–17.

[48] See the list established by Zacos-Veglery, tables 4–6, 8–13, 16.

[49] Zacos-Veglery, 145–46, tables 1 and 3.

[50] Zacos-Veglery, 150, 156, tables 6/2, 11. For Mikkinas and Gregory, one should add Morrisson-Seibt, "Sceaux de commerciaires," 234–36, 240, no. 17 (apotheke of Africa); and *Dated Seals,* nos. 19–20.

the 4th indiction (690/91) George patrikios was holding the office of archon tou blattiou in association with Theophylaktos while he was kommerkiarios of two apothekai on his own.[51] This situation also points to a kind of association based on free individualistic speculation and not to any kind of state appointment.

3. The mandates are normally for one year, most probably from the beginning, certainly from 673/74 onward—one more indication of yearly farming obtained by bidding at an auction. For a limited period, from 687 to 715, we have some seals with two consecutive indictions, which have been interpreted as those of civil servants who, having continued for a second year, added another figure on their boulloterion.[52] This hypothesis should be abandoned because it presents major difficulties, technical (how could blank space for inscribing the "additional" indiction be provided if not from the beginning?) and archeological (the figure of the "additional" indiction is not any crisper than the "old" one). Another hypothesis, less unrealistic but also unconvincing, is that the boulloterion was made during the second consecutive mandate and that the first's indiction was added for "historical" purposes.[53] On the contrary, the farming hypothesis fits well with the existing documentation: in cases of double indictions one has to assume that, for some reason, the highest bidder obtained a two-year mandate that he inscribed right away on his boulloterion; if, with time, this boulloterion was worn out or broken and needed to be replaced, the second boulloterion, if made after the end of the first year, could mention only the second of the two indictions, the one during which it was effectively used. And we have some examples of this procedure: George patrikios and Theophylaktos archontes tou blattiou for indictions 3 and 4 (689–91) and again for indiction 4 (690/91); the same individuals, general kommerkiarioi of Lazike, etc., for indictions 5 and 6 (691–93) and again for indiction 6 (692/93).[54]

4. One assumes that as the mandates were for a full indictional year, bidding for obtaining them would normally occur in the course of the previous year. And this most probably was the case. But there are some instances where it seems that mandates were secured after the beginning of the indiction: Kosmas, well-attested kommerkiarios of the years 679/80 to 690/91, had the honorific title of stratelates from indiction 8 to indiction 2 (679/80–688/89) and still has it on a seal of indiction 3 (689/90); but on two other seals of the same indiction 3 (689/90) he bears the higher title of apo hypaton, to which he has been promoted in the interim.[55] Similar remarks can be made for the kommerkiarios George (690/91–695/96), who started as scribon in indiction 4 (690/91), kept the same title on one seal of indiction 5 (691/92), and was then promoted to apo hypaton for the rest of his career, starting in that same indiction 5 (691/92), of which we have two seals.[56] These examples are eloquent. Now, if the auction did not necessarily take place before the beginning of the indictional year, for which the concession was obtained, one can assume that this concession did not concern customs duties but was related to a product depending on a yearly cycle. This is in fact the case of silk.

The farming of offices was a well-known practice in the later Roman Empire; the emperors forbade it repeatedly, thus showing that the practice never stopped: it should be noted here that they shared profits with tax farmers.[57] The main inconvenience of the system, pointed out in Justinian's Novella 8,[58] is that the emperor thus deprived himself of the possibility of intervening and correcting injustices. We have here a very small number of very wealthy people, who do business with the state and in the name of the state; in order to increase their economic power—and their leverage upon the government—they create associations with each other. Most probably they also benefit from political support: is it mere chance if the seals of some of them—and of the very flourishing ones—disappear with a change of emperor? George patrikios and Theophylaktos, very active during the first reign of Justinian II (between 689 and 693), do not show up for twelve years, and they reappear in 705/6 and 708/9, during this same Justinian's second reign.[59] Constantine apo eparchon is attested only under Tiberios-Apsimaros.[60] The successful team of Synetos and Nicetas, well attested in indictions 9 to 13 (710–15),[61] disappears from the business when a tax collector, Theodosios III, comes to power in Constantinople. But the most eloquent case is that of George apo hypaton, also scandalously active during the first reign of Justinian II: for indiction 8 (694/95) he had at least seven mandates; for indiction 9 (695/96) he obtained at least four more.[62] But by the end of 695 Justinian II was overthrown by the Constantinopolitan populace because of his fiscal policies, and his two main financial ministers were lynched. The kommerkiarios George apo hypaton also disappears from the scene, for good. But what is impressive is that one of the apothekai that he had received in concession for indictions 8 and 9 (694–96), Asia, Caria, Lycia, etc., reappears on a seal of indictions 9 and 10 (695–97) without the name of a kommerkiarios and with the inscription ἀποθήκης τῶν βασιλικῶν κομμερκίων of Asia, Caria, Lycia. It looks as if the state, anonymously, had taken over directly the administration of the apotheke. The general atmosphere seems to be that of the cleansing of scandals; the more so, since two more ἀποθῆκαι τῶν βασιλικῶν κομμερκίων without kommerkiarios appear on seals of that date, right after the downfall of Justinian II.[63]

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[51] Zacos-Veglery, 149–51, tables 6/1 and 6/2.

[52] Millet, "Commerciaires," 310; cf. Zacos-Veglery, 137.

[53] Zacos-Veglery, 280.

[54] Zacos-Veglery, nos. 165 and 167; 178 and 179. An uncertain case appears in table 36, p. 202: Thomas and John ergasteriarchai and archontes tou blattiou for ind. 1 (687/88); anonymous ergasteriarchai and archontes tou blattiou for ind. 1 and 2 (687–89) and, once again, anonymous for ind. 2 (688/89). One wonders if the last two anonymous seals are not a testimony of direct administration by the state, after Thomas and John had been dismissed. See below for a similar case.

[55] Zacos-Veglery, 147–48, table 4. The lone figure of the emperor represented on this seal excludes the hypothesis of attributing it to the previous indiction 3 (674/75), when three equal autocrators were in power.

[56] Zacos-Veglery, 152–54, table 8.

[57] Cf. R. Guilland, "Vénalité et favoritisme à Byzance," *REB* 10 (1953), 35; cf. idem, *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines*, I (Berlin-Amsterdam, 1967), 71; and Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 571–72, 574, 576–77, 588. Cf. P. Veyne, "Clientèle et corruption au service de l'état: La vénalité des offices dans le Bas-Empire romain," *Annales* 36/3 (1981), 339–60.

[58] *CIC* III, *Nov.* 75.

This idea of direct administration by the state seems to have been forgotten for some years. Regular kommerkiarioi/farmers reappear throughout the first third of the eighth century, including the first half of the reign of Leo III the Isaurian,[64] up to 728/29. Then a radical change occurred: from 730/31 onward the seals of apothekai and of provincial kommerkiarioi disappear altogether; they are replaced by seals that have the imperial portrait(s), are dated by one (and never two) indictions, and bear the impersonal inscription τῶν βασιλικῶν κομμερκίων, "of the imperial kommerkia," followed by the names of the provinces or cities concerned.[65] None of these seals, which were used for more than a century, has on its reverse any imprint of burlap: it would seem that the custom of sealing bales of merchandise disappeared during the first third of the eighth century.[66] It would also seem that from then on the practice of farming the kommerkia also disappeared, being replaced by direct and impersonal administration by the state. This change may reflect other more important structural reforms. But it must, in any case, be related to the new idealism—I could say, the new puritanism—introduced in Constantinople by the first Isaurian emperor, together with the militant nationalism that characterizes the period.[67] Isn't it this same Leo III who ordered the judges' salaries to be paid by the imperial treasury, in order to combat corruption?[68]

During more than half a century, starting in 730/31, we find no more seals of kommerkiarioi on which the name of a province or city is mentioned. There remain only some seals, without geographic specification, of γενικοὶ κομμερκιάριοι who we may assume were based in Constantinople because they often add the title archontes tou blattiou.[69] The meaning of the title "general kommerkiarios" on these eighth-century seals is open to speculation, but it is undoubtedly a survival of pre-730 practices, probably due to the closeness of the service of the blattion. But this last service will disappear before the end of the eighth century (cf. below, Appendix 1). The title γενικὸς κομμερκιάριος also disappears, with the exception of only two seals of the early ninth century from Chaldia and Pontos.[70] From 832/33 dates also the last known seal of "imperial kommerkia" with imperial portraits. Then we have only three intermediate seals, which still display the number of the indiction: Adrianople of indiction 2, Thessalonica of indiction 4, and Sinope of Euxeinos Pontos of indiction 11, which I would prefer to place close to each other and as close as possible to 832/33. Sinope could date to 832/33, Adrianople to 838/39, and

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[59] Zacos-Veglery, 150–51, table 6/2.

[60] Zacos-Veglery, 155, table 10.

[61] Zacos-Veglery, 156–57, table 11.

[62] Zacos-Veglery, 152–54, table 8.

[63] List in Zacos-Veglery, 190, table 33.

[64] Cf. Zacos-Veglery, 155–61, tables 8–16.

[65] List in Zacos-Veglery, 192–97, table 34.

[66] Two late examples from 700/702 and 713/16: Zacos-Veglery, nos. 201, 216.

[67] Hélène Ahrweiler, *L'idéologie politique de l'empire byzantin* (Paris, 1975), 29 f.

[68] Last paragraph of the prooimion of the Isaurian Ecloga: *Ecloga*, ed. L. Burgmann, Forschungen zur byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte, hrsg. v. D. Simon, Bd. 10 (Frankfurt, 1983), 166.

[69] E.g., Zacos-Veglery, nos. 215, 267, 268, 272, 275, 1883, 2264, 2635A; cf. (gen.) komm. of the 8th century (often late 8th/early 9th century) not coupled with blattion, ibid., nos. 968, 1811, 2100, 2182, 2364, 2502. For the blattion and its meaning see below, Appendix 1.

[70] Zacos-Veglery, nos. 1880, 2077A.

Thessalonica to 840/41[71]—all three under the reign of Emperor Theophilos, who might thus be considered as the initiator of this gradual simplification of the kommerkiarioi seals.

If the sixth- and early seventh-century kommerkiarioi were concentrated at the end of the silk route, this was because silk imports were essential for maintaining an adequate supply of luxury garments in the empire: domestic production was still too new and could not meet the demand—even in the tenth century Byzantium will continue importing silkware from the Arabs, in spite of its own full-blown production. But the seventh century was also the period during which Byzantine silk production grew and became one of the pillars of the empire's state economy. And I think that the seals of kommerkiarioi are related to and evidence of this growth. In spite of the fact that they can be accurately dated, I will examine them in large groups because I would like to give a certain statistical basis to my conclusions. I will divide the seals into three groups, defined by external characteristics: (a) seals of kommerkiarioi without the indiction (down to 672); (b) seals of kommerkiarioi with the indiction (673/74–728/29); and (c) seals of the "imperial kommerkia" (730/31–end).

Silk production requires essentially the eggs of silkworms, a carefully prepared environment, quantities of high-quality mulberry leaves for feeding the larvae, and an abundant labor force available once a year, in the spring, when the silkworms grow and need to be fed and tended. After the harvest and after having set aside cocoons for reproduction, the reeling of the remaining ones is also a time-consuming operation requiring skill. Mulberry trees grow in all moderate climates and on all kinds of land, except for very humid areas: theoretically they could be grown throughout the territory of the Byzantine Empire, but they have always been scattered, mentioned usually at the edge of fields or close to villages, without any attested attempt to create mulberry plantations. As the silk caterpillars are extremely voracious (during their feeding period, they consume about twenty times their own weight in mulberry leaves daily) and as they reproduce very quickly, an adequate provision of leaves was the main difficulty limiting the otherwise vast possibilities of production.[72]

The Byzantine state was faced with the problem of creating this new industry. It is probable that the first attempts were made in Syria and Phoinike, where specialized workers of imported silk were concentrated in the sixth century (Tyre and Beirut). But there were opportunities for increasing the production elsewhere in Byzantium. And, more important, with the Arab onslaught the empire definitely lost these regions in 638. Byzantine silk production and the silk industry had to move toward the northwest. I suppose that this was the main mission of the kommerkiarioi, as attested by their seals bearing the imperial effigy. Is it a coincidence that these seals appear precisely when the Byzantines started producing their own silk?

As a hypothesis, I have proposed considering these seals as guaranteeing the quality, and eventually the quantity, of packages of silk and declaring that proper authorization was given for its sale to specialized workers, who would transform it into thread, dye it, weave it, embroider it, and so on. In an initial stage the kommerkiarios—as the old comes commerciorum—was an intermediary, buying imported silk and selling it to the workers (μεταξάριοι). His raison d'être was to make sure that silk was not imported at any price and, in fact, to lower the prices asked by the Persian merchants. He had a warehouse for storing his merchandise safely. It is probable that, when the domestic production of silk began, he was also the only person authorized to buy from the producers, keep the product in this same warehouse, and resell it to the silk workers after having guaranteed its quality.

One may suppose that a similar system continued to be applied when Syria and Phoinike were lost to the Persians (613–27) and, for good, to the Arabs (638 ff), with the officials called "general kommerkiarioi" without geographic indication residing in Constantinople and exercising authority in most of the empire (including Byzantine Africa). I have already described the seals of these officials and mentioned the very few texts that speak of them. Then starts a series of seals of many provincial kommerkiarioi: the earliest one appears in Cyprus (629–31), which is, so to speak, the natural prolongation of the silk route of the main-

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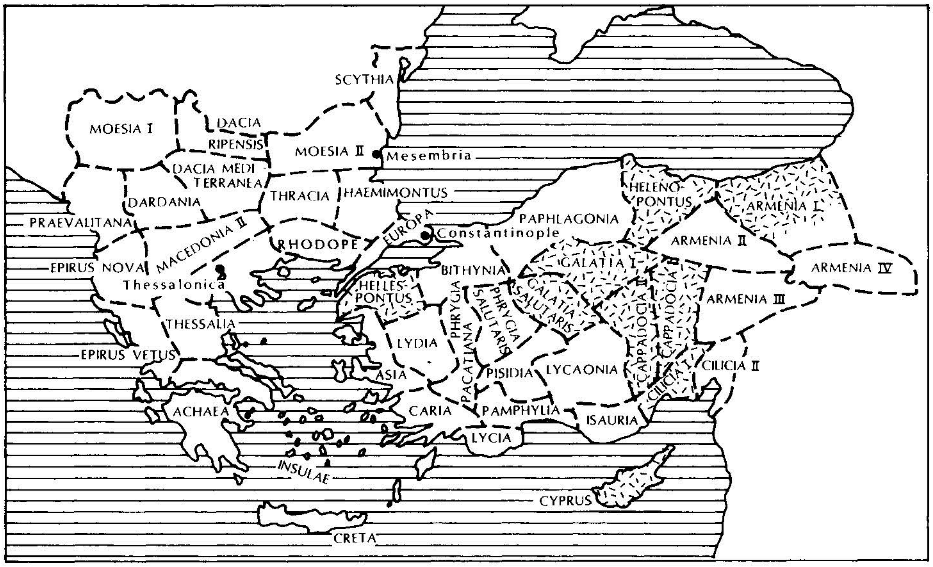
[71] Zacos-Veglery, nos. 1406, 2103 and 2894 (suggested dates for Thessalonica, 810/11 or 825/26; for Adrianople, 838/39(?); for Sinope, 832/33 or 847/48. Cf. also the introductory remarks of Zacos-Veglery, 136–40, concerning the appearance and the end of indiction dating, the latter being subtly connected with the appearance in the sources of the word *kommerkion* "in the sense of indirect taxes on the sale and circulation of merchandise."

[72] Technical information and bibliographic references on silkworms and silk production can be found in any encyclopedia, for example, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.


SCYTHIA
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MACEDONIA II
RHODOPE
EUROPA
Constantinople
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EPIRUS NOVA
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INSULAE
CYPRUS
CRETA

1. Provinces mentioned on seals of kommerkiarioi (629–72)

land; then we find seals of kommerkiarioi of Africa, practically for as long as this province remained Byzantine (641/42, 642/47, 673/74); then comes the turn of Asia Minor: seals dating between the years 654 and 672 mention both Galatias, both Cappadocias, Helenopontos, Cilicia I, and two cities, Abydos (which corresponds to the province of Hellespontos) and Sebastopolis (of Armenia I).[73] Our documentation, although fragmentary (in all, we know of about three hundred dated seals of kommerkiarioi between the mid-sixth and the mid-ninth centuries), shows that the Byzantine kommerkiarioi of the provinces start appearing close to the places where silk traditionally originated. See Map 1.

Thus texts and seals of that period point toward the silk trade. The geographic limitations of the kommerkiarioi could indicate the limits of the market in which they were authorized to sell. But this cannot be their only meaning: many recent studies have shown that provincial cities declined sharply during the early seventh century; vast urban centers of late antiquity, such as Sardis or Ephesus, were replaced by nearby "fortified villages," which kept their ancient names. It is hard to imagine that this "ruralized" milieu would have prospective buyers of luxury items in numbers justifying the creation of monopolies.

What seems to me more likely is that the kommerkiarioi were mainly related to silk production—and its promotion—inside "their" provinces. I *imagine* them as wealthy businessmen at the head of important organizations—or, at least, having a number of employees—who had the "seed" and know-how, approached peasants who had mulberry trees and manpower, eventually lent them some money at the beginning, and bought their crop at the end. As they had acquired the exclusive rights for the province at a state auction, they were in a good position to keep the prices down. These "exclusive rights" seem to be of capital importance for the whole procedure because they would make the kommerkiarioi sole possible buyers of silk even for peasants who had their own "seed" and know-how. The yearly product, raw or partly finished, would be concentrated in the apotheke—one or more warehouses—controlled, classified according to quality, certified with the seals. Then it would be ready for marketing, wherever there was demand for it, first of all in Constantinople, where the industry was concentrated, including the imperial ergasterion (workshop) and blattion, the direction of which was often held (that is, farmed out) by the same persons who farmed the kommerkiarioi positions (cf. below, Appendix 1).

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[73] Zacos-Veglery, 145, 146, 198, 222 (tables 1, 3, 35); Morrisson-Seibt, "Sceaux de commerciaires," 231, 233, 234.

It is obvious that these operations could be extremely profitable for those who headed them; they could also be very profitable for the state treasury. But the effects of free competition among the bidders were mitigated when these created associations, "trusts." Political patronage and corruption could also play an important role in the process, as we have already seen. At certain times a wealthy kommerkiarios or association of kommerkiarioi appear to have such extended concessions that they appear quasi monopolistic.

The system seems to have functioned well enough to succeed in propagating silk production over most of the imperial territory. Seals dated with indictions between 673/74 and 728/29 show that during this fifty-five-year period kommerkiarioi appear throughout Byzantine Asia Minor, the islands of the Aigaion, and the southern part of the Balkans. Of course this does not necessarily mean that they were successful everywhere. Some provinces appear on many seals, while others appear very seldom: for example, Asia appears on nine seals, from 689/90 to 755/56, but Lykaonia appears on only two (689/91 and 691/93).[74] The names of themes start appearing as geographic indications in the last twenty years of the seventh century with Armeniakon and Hellas.[75] This shows in fact that we have individuals ready to take charge of entire themes encompassing many provinces. But here again one must stress the fragmentary character of our documentation as well as the fact that seals are preserved at random and that, as far as statistics are concerned, our basis is weak. Yet, in spite of the fragility of any conclusions drawn on this basis, I have represented in Map 2 what the published seals inform us about the expansion of the kommerkiarioi. I have distinguished between provinces mentioned once or twice, three or four times, and five to nine times. The result is rather significant: silk production seems to have expanded in various degrees in all Asia Minor, with the exception, maybe due to sheer chance, of Galatia I, that is, the region of Ankara. Its strongest concentrations are to be sought, expectedly, along the densely inhabited and fertile littoral and in the two Cappadocias, also known to have been fertile and densely populated during late antiquity.

Then comes the reform of Leo III; the impersonal "imperial kommerkia," which I presume are run directly by the state, replace the kommerkiarioi. At the same time the names of the Roman provinces start being replaced more and more often by those of the Byzantine themes. During a first period, from 730/31 to 755/56, both systems are used concurrently. After 755/56 the names of the provinces disappear. At the same time the geographic distribution of "imperial kommerkia" becomes dramatically limited, essentially to three cities (Constantinople, Thessalonica, Mesembria) and to one theme (Thrace),[76] and this until the first decades of the ninth century. On Map 3 one finds the provinces with "imperial kommerkia" attested between 730/31 and 755/56; on Map 4 one finds the themes with "imperial kommerkia" attested between 730/31 and 755/56 and the cities and the theme that have imperial kommerkia throughout the period from 730/31 to the twenties of the ninth century. What appears very clearly is the gradual shrinking of what I call "the silk-producing area" and its moving westward. This is undoubtedly related to the well-known Arab wars.

In 674–78 the Arabs besieged or blockaded Constantinople for the first time; they did it mainly by sea, thus leaving most of Byzantine Asia Minor practically untouched. Their crushing defeat in 678 obliged them to conclude a humiliating treaty with the emperor, and peace prevailed for three decades. But then the Islamic onslaught started again: in 691/92 they occupied Armenia; in 709 they reached Tyana; in 710/11 they were still limited to the eastern outskirts, but occupied fortresses in Cilicia. Then they started to invade Asia Minor. In 717 Arab armies crossed all of Asia Minor and started their second unsuccessful siege of Constantinople. Then, from 726 onward, Arab-Byzantine clashes, invasions, and counterinvasions became a permanent feature of life in the East.

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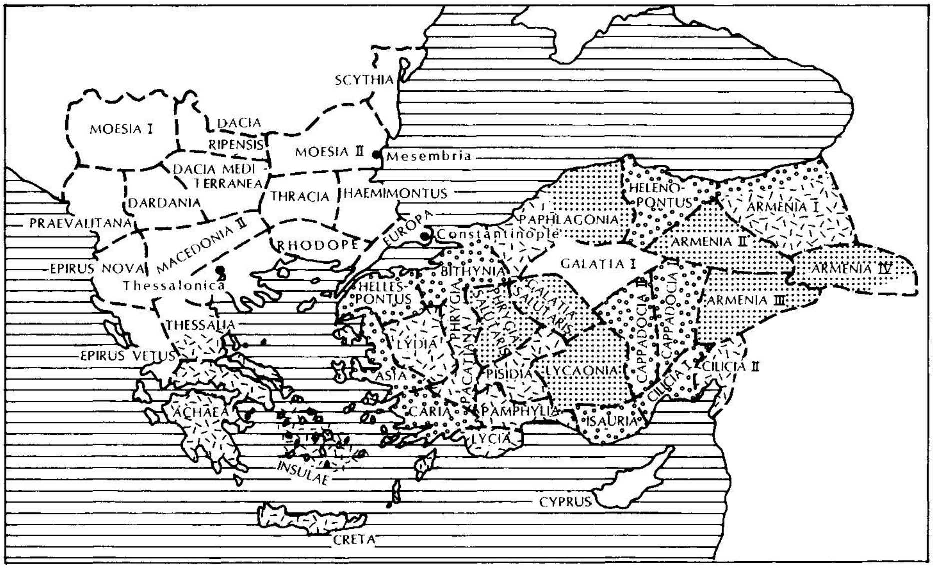
[74] Zacos-Veglery, 166, 192, 196 (tables 19, 34); nos. 166, 177.

[75] Zacos-Veglery, 164, 174–75 (tables 18/2, 24).

[76] The theme of Thrace, created in 679/80, had its western part transformed into a separate theme called Macedonia (with Adrianople as its capital). This seems to have taken place between 789 and 802. The kommerkia of Thrace and Macedonia are mentioned on a seal of 820/21; an imperial kommerkiarios of Thrace and Macedonia appears on a seal of 831/32; cf. Zacos-Veglery, no. 282, and *Dated Seals*, no. 46.


SCYTHIA
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RHODOPE
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Constantinople
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ARMENIA III
EPIRUS NOVA
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ACHAEA
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PAMPHYLIA
ISAURIA
LYCIA
INSULAE
CYPRUS
CRETA

2. Provinces mentioned on seals of kommerkiarioi (673/74–728/29) once or twice (*dots*), three or four times (*rods*), five to nine times (*circles*)

The Arabs came again to Kaisareia and besieged Nikaia. Although the Byzantine victory of Akroinon (740) confirmed the emperor's control over most of the peninsula, and Constantine V's campaigns in Syria and Armenia boosted the prestige and morale of the empire, nevertheless Arab invasions remained possible—and in fact occurred—all over the southern border region. Asia Minor, vigorously defended, was nonetheless a permanent battlefield, especially in its eastern part. Under these conditions growing silkworms was no longer possible—and might have looked almost preposterous. So Byzantine silk production gradually retreated to the Balkans where repeated peace treaties with the Bulgars, as well as some successful wars against them, guaranteed the necessary peaceful environment.

These maps and the evolution that they show confirm, I think, my hypothesis about the nature of the office of kommerkiarios—and of the imperial kommerkion. They show that these functions cannot be related to war or to provisioning the army, since the offices "flee" the war zone.[77] They cannot yet be related to duty collection, because they are not related to ports or major routes; because they are concerned with yearly harvests; and, above all, because there are no texts prior to the ninth century relating them to any kind of duty collection.

Yet it seems that at some rare times tax collecting may have been a side occupation for kommerkiarioi or an occupation exercised over territories that corresponded to those of an apotheke. This can be seen thanks to the title of logothete or general logothete as well as to terms like *dioiketes* or *dioikesis* on seals of the category we are interested in. In the early Byzantine centuries logothete meant tax collector.[78] The tax collector was also the *dioiketes*.[79] Now these titles appear on some early seals;[80] a seal dated between 659 and 668 belonged

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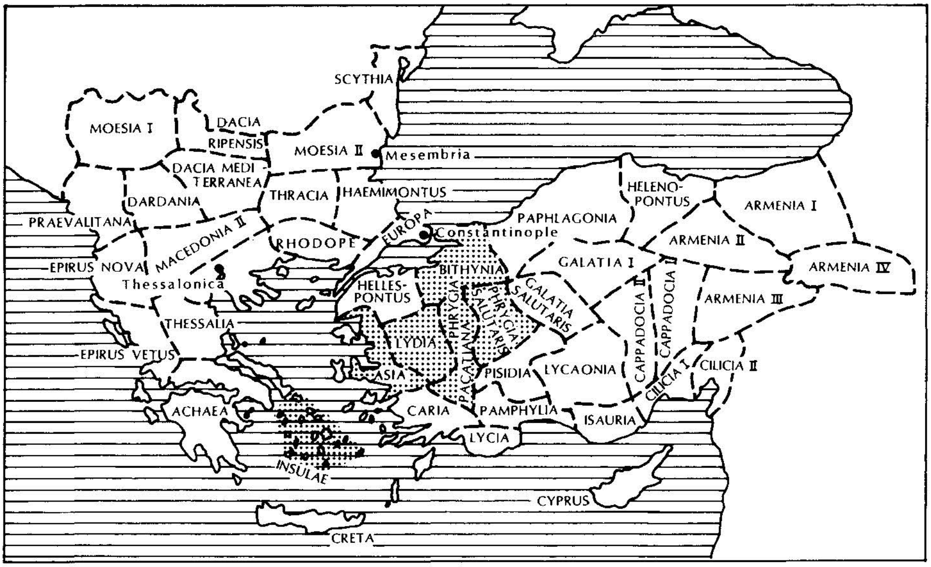
[77] This is, in my view, a fundamental argument against the theory of M. Hendy (cf. above, note 12).

[78] R. Guilland, "Les logothètes," *REB* 29 (1971), 5–126; cf. V. Laurent, *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin* (Paris, 1981), II, 129.

[79] N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles* (Paris, 1972), 313 and note 150.

[80] Zacos-Veglery, 214.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Constantinople
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EPIRUS NOVA
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CYPRUS
CRETA

3. Provinces mentioned on seals of imperial kommerkia (730/31–755/56)

to a kommerkiarios who was at the same time stratiotikos logothete, that is, involved in paying the salaries of the army.[81] But these are quite exceptional cases. Later such phenomena become more frequent: (a) in 696/97, in 702/4, and in 715/16(?) we find seals with the imperial effigy that belonged to γενικοὶ λογοθέται of apothekai (Phrygia Pacatiana and Lydia, Sicily, Koloneia and Kamacha, Lazike, Constantinople);[82] (b) from 725/26 to 728/29 we have a series of seals that belonged to γενικοὶ λογοθέται *and* kommerkiarioi of several apothekai in the northwest of Asia Minor, Constantinople, Thessalonica, and Mesembria.[83] I think that case (b), more explicit, clarifies case (a): in both cases we have individuals who have farmed simultaneously the kommerkion and the direct taxation within the borders of an "apotheke," which thus appears as an entity of administrative and fiscal geography, a kind of "province": we shall see (below, Appendix 2) that these same circumscriptions were used in 694/95 in order to define the region in which an individual was entitled to sell slaves. But on the other hand we shall later (736/37) find a seal with the inscription "imperial kommerkia of the *dioikesis* of Andros":[84] here the limits of the fiscal *dioikesis* were used to define those of the kommerkion. It seems that little by little the gap between silk trade and tax collection was growing narrower, undoubtedly because both were exercised by the same persons, business and tax farmers at the beginning, civil servants later.

A further question that needs to be answered, even if incompletely, is whether these kommerkiarioi were trading in merchandise other than silk. The cautious answer is that there is no text informing us that they did so; and that in the unique case of 694/95 when slave trade was engaged in by a person who was at the same time kommerkiarios (below, Appendix 2), this person had a different seal made for this second activity—which, consequently, was not normally included in his mandate

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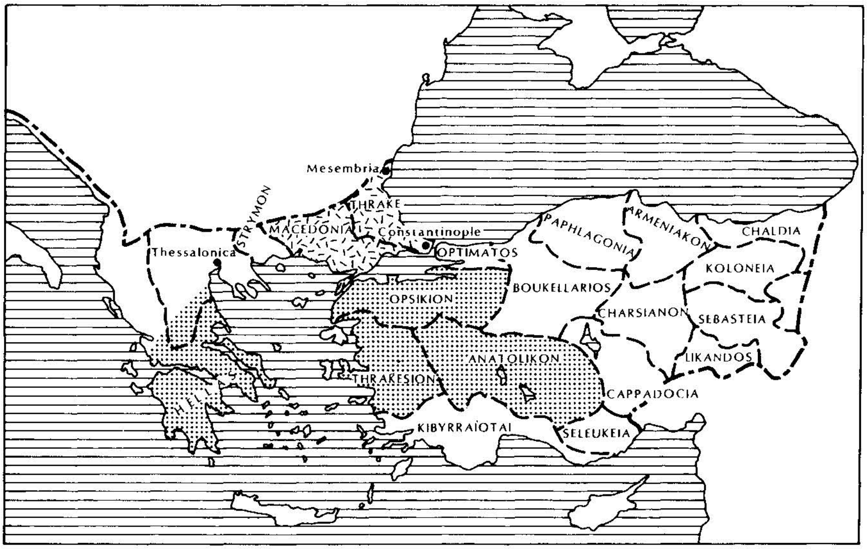
[81] Zacos-Veglery, no. 144; cf. Guilland, "Logothètes," 25–26.
[82] Zacos-Veglery, nos. 195, 197, 203, 204, 220.
[83] Zacos-Veglery, nos. 232–237. cf. table 20, pp. 164–65.
[84] Millet, "Commerciaires," 315; Likhačev, "Datirovannye," 200–201. Cf. Zacos-Veglery, 193.


Mesembria
STRYMON
THRAKE
MACEDONIA
Constantinople
Thessalonica
OPTIMATOS
OPSIKION
PAPHLAGONIA
ARMENIAKON
CHALDIA
KOLONEIA
BOUKELLARIOS
CHARSIANON
SEBASTEIA
LIKANDOS
ANATOLIKON
THRAKESION
CAPPADOCIA
HELLAS
KIBYRRAIOTAI
SELEUKEIA

4. Themes mentioned on seals of imperial kommerkia between 730/31 and 755/56 (*dots*) and up to the early ninth century (*rods*)

as kommerkiarios. Thus in a free economy, as the Byzantine one, I would tend to define the prerogatives of a kommerkiarios as being monopolistic only so far as trade in raw silk was concerned, but not excluding, by any means, other commercial activities.

Particularities appear in the cases of kommerkiarioi whose jurisdiction is constantly defined by the name of a city. In addition to the kommerkiarios of Abydos, who could well extend his jurisdiction over all of the province of Hellespontos (cf. p. 39), there are three of them, all of whom appear during, or shortly after, the reigns of Justinian II (685–95, 705–11). This may well be sheer coincidence; yet it should be noted because of the impressive record of this emperor as a reformer, especially because of his dynamic, imaginative, and far-reaching—albeit contested—monetary, financial, and fiscal policies.[85] These general kommerkiarioi are the following:

(a) Constantinople, attested uninterruptedly from 688/89 to 727/28.[86] It is probable that after Leo III's reform an office of "imperial kommerkia" of the city was created,[87] but its life was short; a "genikos kommerkiarios," residing in Constantinople (because he often adds the title archon tou blattiou), is attested continuously throughout the eighth century.[88]

(b) Mesembria, attested uninterruptedly from 690/91 to the joint reign of Constantine V and Leo IV (751–75).[89]

(c) Thessalonica, attested for the first time in 712/13.[90]

The main common characteristics of the last two cities in the seventh and eighth centuries is that both are close to the frontier and both are ports that could serve as outlets for the trade of vast hinterlands, inhabited by economically underdeveloped peoples, the Bulgars and the Southern Slavs. Their cases will be examined in detail elsewhere.

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[85] Cf. Constance Head, *Justinian II of Byzantium* (Milwaukee, 1972).

[86] List in Zacos-Veglery, 120–22 (table 21).

[87] Zacos-Veglery, no. 257 (reading incomplete).

[88] List in Zacos-Veglery, 203–5. Cf. also above.

[89] List in Zacos-Veglery, 182–84.

[90] List in Zacos-Veglery, 185–87.

For the time being, it suffices to say that since the merchants coming from the north of the Balkans represented primary economies, it is most likely that barter was the main type of exchange taking place there, even if calculations were done by using the Byzantine gold coin as money of account.[91] Consequently the kommerkiarioi were obliged to trade back to Byzantium all kinds of merchandise that they received in exchange for what they exported. These cities would thus appear as trading outposts, where exchanges between private merchants of the two countries were being supervised: this was the frontier between a barter economy and a monetary one. It is obvious that in such places and under such conditions the potential for profit making was very high.

It is possible that the third known kommerkiarios of a city, that of Constantinople, was also dealing with foreign trade coming directly to the Byzantine capital. This is a hypothesis not contradicted by any text that I know—but not supported by any either. Consequently for the time being it cannot lead us any further.

The explanations above raise one more question: why didn't similar institutions appear on the eastern frontier? A first answer would be that there is no reason for presuming that whatever institutions prevail in the western part of the empire should prevail everywhere. We know, for example, that in the early tenth century the strategoi of the western themes were remunerated by collecting sportulae (συνήθειαι) locally, while those of the East received their salaries directly from the emperor.[92] But I think that there could also be an explanation for the absence of kommerkiarioi in the East. Arab merchants came from an economy at least as developed and monetarized as that of the Byzantines; and the Arabs had their own silk production, part of which was exported and sold in the market of Constantinople, while the Arabs also imported high-quality Byzantine silk and other textiles. The state could supervise the exchanges—barter or monetary—between merchants of the two sides without needing to intervene and act as a merchant itself, either through a farmer/kommerkiarios or directly by its officials of the "imperial kommerkia."

I have mentioned above that with time some kommerkiarioi began to take an interest in collecting taxes. Then around the year 800 a new tax on merchandise, called the *kommerkion*, appears for the first time in the sources. It is a sales tax collected on (certain) items sold in markets or fairs and is also called πρατίκιον. It appears also as a circulation tax of 10 percent ad valorem collected on merchandise imported to or exported from Byzantine territory; inside the empire a kommerkion (of how much?) is collected on merchandise reaching or leaving Constantinople through the straits by boat. The exact nature of this tax has intrigued scholars, who interpreted it one way or the other, or in a third way combining circulation and sales tax. It is not my intention to enter this discussion, which is a continuation of the quarrels concerning the *octava*, the circulation and sales tax of early Byzantine times (attested at least until 634).[93] What is important to stress for our purposes is that, in spite of the absolute lexicographic resemblance, the collection of the kommerkion is *not necessarily* the job of the kommerkiarioi.

At about the time when the "kommerkion" tax appears, important changes can be detected in the institution of the "imperial kommerkia."

(a) The imperial effigy disappears from the seals: a seal of Debeltos of 832/33 is the last one to bear the emperor's portrait.[94]

(b) The indiction dating also disappears in the reign of Theophilos, during which we find some "intermediate" seals with the indiction but without the imperial effigy.

According to the basic hypothesis that I have suggested in this paper, these phenomena would indicate that in the meantime the activities of the "imperial kommerkia" had changed in such a way that their seals were no longer related to the marketing of raw silk.

(c) The impersonal "imperial kommerkia" also disappear from the seals; the last attested one is that of Debeltos of 832/33.

(d) The kommerkiarioi reappear, sometimes as "general kommerkiarioi" but usually as "imperial" kommerkiarioi. The first dated mention of this title, which is a novelty, appears in 831/32 on the seal of Constantine, imperial kommerkiarios of Thrace and Macedonia (with a portrait of Emperor Theophilos; indiction 10: *Dated Seals,* no. 46).

(e) The geographic extent of their jurisdiction is defined sometimes with the name of one or two, even three, themes but more and more often by the name of a city, always a port, sometimes a river harbor. It is clear that the new functions are related to maritime trade, mainly with foreign countries. This is a function of the kommerkiarioi of cities that was known in the eighth century and became generalized in the ninth. It may provide the explanation for the metamorphosis of a silk tradesman into a customs official.

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[91] The question has been discussed by Bibicou, *Douanes,* 246–55 (bibliographical references).

[92] *De Cerimoniis,* Bonn ed., 696–697.

[93] The complicated problems of indirect taxation in Byzantium have been gallantly reexamined by Bibicou, *Douanes* (with analysis and evaluation of previous publications).

[94] Zacos-Veglery, no. 285.

Being completely deprived of texts concerning these changes, we are limited to speculation. A likely scenario would be the following: having the monopoly over trade of expensive items with foreigners, the frontier-city kommerkiarios had the right to control the merchandise imported or exported by other tradesmen; for reasons of expediency he also started collecting the import or export duty; this duty was called the kommerkion, not only because it affected commerce but also because it was collected, in the eighth century, at the "imperial kommerkia." Then, at a moment unknown to us but which must have been close to the year 800, the "imperial kommerkia" ceased to control domestic silk production and to exercise trade in precious materials for the profit of the state (cf., however, note 12): the imperial effigy and the indiction year on the seals became obsolete and gradually disappeared. The relatively major state enterprises that were the imperial kommerkia also disappeared and were replaced by one civil servant, the imperial kommerkiarios, who had kept the rest of his prerogatives: customs controls and collection of the duty called the kommerkion. Tax collection being his most striking activity in the eyes of law-abiding Byzantines, he was assimilated to a *praktor*. I repeat that the above scenario is a product of imagination.

Be that as it may, it is certain that the ninth- and tenth-century kommerkiarioi were completely divorced from silk trade and production. The Book of the Eparch (chaps. VI, VII) describes how things were done in the very early tenth century (in fact, these must have been practices already established in the ninth century): raw silk (or cocoons?) was brought to Constantinople by people from the country (ἐξωτικοί); the text does not specify whether they were producers or intermediaries, obviously because they could be both. But they could not be μεταξοπράται, that is, silk merchants, because these were not allowed to make purchases directly in the provinces. When the time for sale came, the silk merchants contributed to a common fund, according to each merchant's wishes, and a list was made (ἀπογραφή, VII.2). This was a wholesale operation, not accessible to the poor members of the guild. The silk was bought (without being burdened by the sales tax, πρατίκιον) and was distributed to the merchants in proportion to what they had contributed to the fund. From then on these merchants were allowed to sell (still by weight) to their colleagues, with a reasonable profit, but they were not allowed to sell directly to other persons or to serve as intermediaries in order to buy for the sake of others. Consequently there is no longer a monopoly over silk production in one province or another, a monopoly that belonged to the state and could be farmed out by a private person. In the tenth century silk production seems to function according to the principles of a free economy with the fundamental difference that there was only one group of possible buyers, the μεταξοπράται of Constantinople, if one wanted his cocoons to be transformed into silk and silk textiles. Buyers and sellers met in Constantinople as two cartels and negotiated the sale, presumably according to the principles of supply and demand, and so on. It is obvious that with time domestic silk production had reached acceptable levels, did not need to be stimulated, and that the state had made the choice of insisting on quality rather than quantity for its limited and protected production.

The passage from one system to the other may be related to the evolution of Byzantine guilds and, in particular, to the creation of new ones in Constantinople related to the silk trade. We know these guilds thanks to the Book of the Eparch which dates from the tenth century. We can say that most of them are the continuation of the late Roman ones. But those related to silk constitute a special case: we meet, for example, the πρανδιοπράται, specializing in textiles imported from Syria; it is obvious that this trade had been invented after the fall of Syria to the Arabs (638)—we do not know how long after. More or less at the same time, the silk trade must have moved also to the capital.

In the sixth and early seventh centuries the kommerkiarioi imported silk which they sold to the μεταξάριοι, who were private dealers—and craftsmen—of silk and who were concentrated in Tyre and Beirut. One assumes that when these cities fell to the Arabs the system was transplanted to Constantinople, with the difference that now (seventh/eighth century) the kommerkiarioi were dealing mainly in home-produced silk which they could sell to private μεταξάϱιοι. I set aside here the imperial factories because these were undoubtedly subject to special treatment and possibly had private sources of silk. When, under Leo III, the state took direct control over silk production, the situation remained essentially the same, with the difference that now imperial factories had absolute priority in selecting what they needed from the year's crop. But in the meantime the Constantinopolitan guilds were developing, including the μεταξοπϱάται, the new dealers in raw silk, who were now concentrated on one street and who obtained the authorization to act as a cartel. After this the role of the state as monopolistic—and paternalistic—intermediary between the producers and the Constantinopolitan merchants lost its meaning. The imperial kommerkia disappear; they are replaced by the "new style" kommerkiarioi, who keep only part of their traditional prerogatives: control of imports and exports and collection of customs duties. The state's direct involvement in foreign trade also disappeared, leaving the field free to private initiative and private enterprise. Although controlled and held back by the state, the principles of a free economy based on the dialectical relation between supply and demand were gaining ground in Constantinople, at the expense of the traditional state controls and of the privileged few, who in the seventh and eighth centuries were able to monopolize them.

"Byzance, paradis du monopole et du privilège"? The case of the silk trade and industry, studied here, shows that state interventionism was declining in the ninth and tenth centuries, to the profit of the tradesmen and craftsmen of Constantinople. What used to be a state monopoly, accessible to a few privileged individuals, was now becoming the privilege of a whole group of professionals, whose activities, motivated by profit, were regulated and protected by the state. The trend, although moderate, appears to be toward capitalism and the development of a dynamic bourgeois class. Wouldn't these changes be the early signs of the flourishing Byzantine urban economies of the eleventh century?

APPENDIX 1

The Blattion

An important group of seals decorated with the imperial portrait are those of officials connected with the Constantinopolitan office of the blattion.[95] The earliest preserved one dates from the reign of Herakleios between 632 and 641 and cannot be read with any certainty.[96] Large numbers of them are extant for the period between 687/88 and 785/86; the office of ἄϱχων (or ἄϱχοντες) τοῦ βλαττίου sometimes appears alone, but usually it is coupled with other titles: ἐϱγαστηϱιάϱχης (687/88–720/29), γενιϰὸς ϰομμεϱϰιάϱιος (713/14[?] and continuously from 749/50 to 785/86), and once with χϱυσοεψητὴς (730/31). To this group also belongs the unique seal of an ἐπάνω τοῦ ἐϱγοδοσίου with the imperial portrait from the year 697/98.[97] This group of seals presents characteristics similar to those of the kommerkiarioi: they are dated, sometimes with two indictions; they are sometimes issued in the names of two people, who must be seen as business partners who farmed these duties; and, for some of these officials, we can say with various degrees of certainty that they had at the same time a "common" seal, without the imperial portrait, which they presumably used for their regular correspondence.[98] In other words, they are seals coming from officials or farmer-officials quite comparable to the kommerkiarioi.

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[95] Zacos-Veglery, 202–5 (table 36); cf. Laurent, *Corpus*, II, nos. 637–650, 658.

[96] N. Likhačev, *Istoričeskoe značenie italogrečeskoj ikonopisi izobraženija Bogomateri* (St. Petersburg, 1911), App., table 4, no. 15, cf. p. 72, fig. 143; republished by Laurent, *Corpus*, II, no. 637, with the suggestion to complete as σὺ[ν τ]ῷ ἐσϰ[έ]πτοϱ(ι) τῶν βλατίων, which is a *hapax;* ϰουϱάτοϱι τῶν βλατίων would seem to me more likely, but even so, a sizable part of the inscription remains unread. The date can be established thanks to the obverse of the seal; the person standing to the right of the central Virgin has a long moustache, like that of Herakleios on his late coins (Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, pl. 16, nos. 275–277); the person to the left of the Virgin wears a crown with pendilia, which indicates that this is an empress, depicted in a way similar to that of Martina on Herakleios' seals (e.g., Morrisson-Seibt, "Sceaux de commerciaires," nos. 1, 2, 11, etc.). The two small figures at the edges must thus be the emperor's sons, coemperor Herakleios-Constantine and Heraklonas (caesar in 632; augustus from 638). We have here the same five standing figures that appear *en buste* on seals of kommerkiarioi (including kommerkiarioi of Tyre, who cannot have existed after the capture of the city by the Arabs in 638: Zacos-Veglery, no. 131; Likhačev, loc. cit., 72, figs. 145, 146). Thus the above seal of the blattion must have been made after Heraklonas' elevation to the rank of caesar (632) and before Herakleios' death (641).

[97] Laurent, *Corpus*, II, no. 638, and especially Zacos-Veglery, no. 198.

[98] See, for example, two seals with inscribed invocational monograms (obv.) and linear inscription (rev.) that belonged to Nicetas and to Ambros, both of the 8th century and with the titles archon of the blattion and general kommerkiarios (published by Zacos-Veglery, nos. 2264 and 2635A; other similar seals: nos. 1862, 1883). It is probable that Nicetas is identical with the archon of 711/12; and it is almost certain that Ambros is the archon who held the office around the year 775: cf. Zacos-Veglery, 205 (table 36).

The seals with imperial portraits described above are related to the imperial workshops for the production of silkware of high quality: these were the ἐργοδόσια, which are still attested in the tenth century. The word βλαττίον initially meant purple dye and purple-dyed silk cloth,[99] which since the time of Justinian had become a state monopoly.[100] That the production of these materials was strictly controlled for their quality as well as for their circulation is a well-known fact. Imperial silk products were on top of the list of the *kekōlymena,* that is, merchandise whose export was prohibited: the well-known story of Liutprand of Cremona constitutes a vivid illustration of the procedure.[101] And I suggest that the seals with the imperial portraits were used above all as a guarantee of the quality of the finished product. This desire for strict controls also explains the use of the indiction for providing the precise date of production (eventually used in order to attribute responsibilities).[102]

The disappearance of the dated seals of the archontes tou blattiou at the end of the eighth century may be related to reforms that followed the destruction by fire of the ergodosia in 792 and their rebuilding by Empress Irene and Constantine VI between 792 and 797.[103] One may suppose that from then on the control elements were woven into the material itself, as can be seen in the Byzantine textile of Aix-la-Chapelle, seat of the Carolingian court:[104] a woven inscription gives the name of the Byzantine "minister" of the treasury responsible for those activities (the epi tou eidikou), the name of the "archon" of (the new ergodosion) of Zeuxippou,[105] and the indiction in which the cloth was produced—that is, approximately the same elements that previously appeared on the seals. One assumes that these measures were later relaxed. Yet still in the tenth century we find the textiles of Siegburg (921–31) and Cologne (976–1025)[106] with woven inscriptions mentioning the names of the reigning emperors: here the names of the sovereigns seem to have replaced their effigies as guarantees of quality.[107] But this novelty did not last long.[108]

APPENDIX 2

A Giant Sale of Slaves in 694/95

The seal mentioning the Slavs of Bithynia as *andrapoda* was first published by B. Pančenko in 1902[109] and has provoked several discussions since that time. G. Ostrogorsky correctly dated the seal to 694/95[110] and considered it as having belonged to the administrator of the Slavs that Justinian II had forcefully settled in Bithynia as soldiers. Other seals of *andrapoda* from Asia Minor that had been published in the meantime did not attract much

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[99] Ph. Koukoules, Βυζαντινῶν Βίος καὶ Πολιτισμός, II/2 (Athens, 1948), 39. Purple has always been a very expensive item. Cf. St. Mrozek, "Le prix de la pourpre en histoire romaine," *Les dévaluations à Rome,* Colloque de l'Ecole Française de Rome 37 (Rome, 1980), 235–42.

[100] Lopez, "Silk," 7, 12, etc. It must be noted, though, that Procopius, *Anecdota* (Teubner), 157, speaks of a monopoly of dyes (βαφῆς . . . βάμματος) that made prices soar.

[101] *Liudprandi relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana,* 53–55: MGH, *SS,* III, ed. G. H. Pertz (Hannover, 1839), 359–60.

[102] From that same 10th century comes the seal of Senacheirim, archon tou chrysoklavou, that is, of the imperial embroidery workshop, which bears the date indiction 4 (Laurent, *Corpus,* II, no. 661) but no imperial effigy. It seems to be close to—and a survival of—the category of intermediate seals already mentioned for the 9th-century kommerkiarioi.

[103] Theophanes, *Chronographia,* I, 469; *Scriptores originum constantinopolitanarum,* II, ed. Preger (Leipzig, 1907), 269.

[104] Lopez, "Silk," pl. VIII.

[105] Cf. Oikonomidès, *Listes de préséance,* 316–18.

[106] Lopez, "Silk," pls. IVb, V.

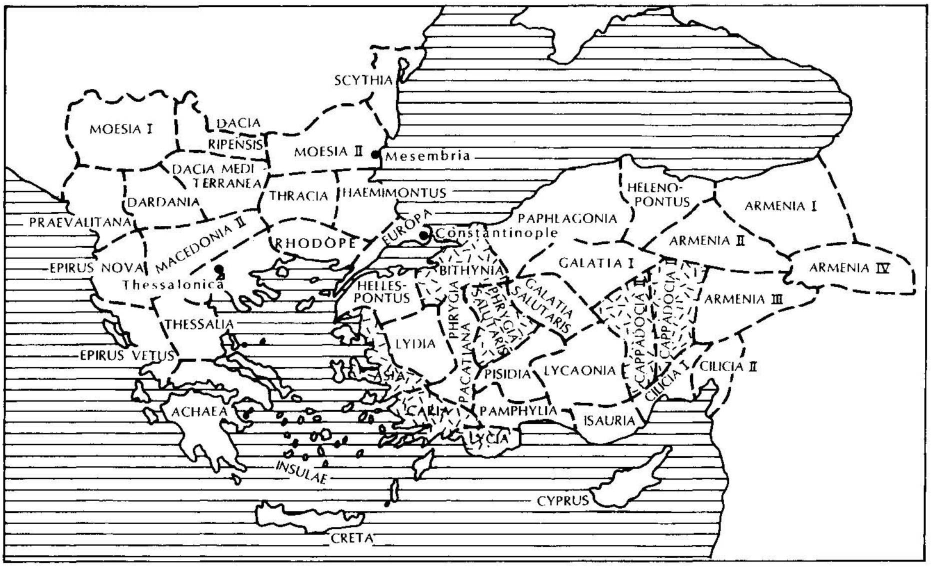
[107] Among the precious items enumerated in the brebion of the monastery of Stroumitza (*IRAIK* 6 [1900], 123) mention is made of a silk textile decorated with a picture of [John I] Tzimiskes (ἐν τῷ μέσῳ ἔχουσα ἱστορίαν τοῦ Τζιμισκῆ). But this could very well be a simple decoration.

[108] It has been argued that the cruciform monogram of [Emperor] Herakleios (610–41) appears on a Byzantine textile preserved in Liège (Lopez, "Silk," pl. IV). This seems to me doubtful, because the reading is uncertain (instead of the supposed K, I read IC) and because there is nothing showing that this is an imperial monogram; consequently it could just as well be the monogram of the craftsman who made it or of the patron who ordered it.

A related problem is posed by some silk textiles bearing names in woven inscriptions: one group is inscribed Ἰωσήφ, the other, rightly associated with the first one, Ζαχαρίου. There is disagreement concerning their date: 6th/7th century? The most recent publication on this topic is by Alisa Baginski and Amely Tidhar, "A Dated Silk Fragment from Avdat (Eboda)," *IEJ* 28 (1978), 113–15 (with bibliographical references). Or 8th century? Cf. Dorothy Shepherd, "A Coptic Silk," *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 34 (1947), 216, 237. As the names seem to be written out in the genitive case (this is certain in the Zacharias group), they cannot be, as has been suggested, an indication of piety toward St. Joseph or St. Zacharias. I would rather understand these inscriptions as indicating the workshop from which the textiles came—in other words, the inscriptions would be "signatures" guaranteeing their quality in order to enhance the marketing of these products. Similar practices are attested since late Roman times: cf. R. Lequiément, "Etiquettes de plomb sur des amphores d'Afrique," *MélRome. Antiquité* 87 (1975), 667–80.

[109] B. Pančenko, "Pamjatnik Slavjan v Vifinii," *IRAIK* 8 (1902), 15–62.

[110] Ostrogorsky, *History,* 117 (with literature).


SCYTHIA
MOESIA I
DACIA RIPENSIS
MOESIA II
Mesembria
DACIA MEDITERRANEA
DARDANIA
THRACIA
HAEMIMONTUS
PRAEVALITANA
MACEDONIA II
EUROPA
Constantinople
RHODOPE
EPIRUS NOVA
Thessalonica
THESSALIA
EPIRUS VETUS
ACHAEA
INSULAE
CRETA
CYPRUS
HELLESPONTUS
BITHYNIA
LYDIA
PHRYGIA
PHRYGIA SALUTARIS
PACATIANA
ASIA
CARIA
LYCIA
PISIDIA
PAMPHYLIA
ISAURIA
LYCAONIA
GALATIA I
GALATIA SALUTARIS
PAPHLAGONIA
HELENOPONTUS
ARMENIA I
ARMENIA II
ARMENIA III
ARMENIA IV
CAPPADOCIA I
CAPPADOCIA II
CILICIA I
CILICIA II

5. Provinces mentioned on seals of *andrapoda* (694/95)

attention.[111] New material has been added by Zacos-Veglery, and has been studied together with the previously published seals on the basis of a new, firm chronology.[112]

(a) All seals have on the obverse the effigy of Emperor Justinian II and are dated indiction 8, that is, 694/95.

(b) The seals mention place names scattered throughout Asia Minor: Asia, Caria, Lycia, Bithynia, Phrygia Salutaris, and the two Cappadocias.

(c) All seals mention *andrapoda* but only that of Bithynia specifies clearly that these were Slavs; that of the two Cappadocias contains a partly legible word, which could be reconstructed as <Σ>κ[λάβ]ον for Σκλάβων, Slavs;[113] that of Salutaris reads ἀνδραπόδων Φρυγῶν Σαλουταρίας, "prisoner Phrygians of Salutaris," which could well refer to Slavs settled in the northern part of Phrygia Salutaris.[114]

(d) Of these seals, only that of the Phrygians of Salutaris contains the word *apotheke,* thus showing that the operations for which the seal was made were directly connected with the kommerkiarioi network.

(e) All seals bear the name of George apo hypaton, a well-known kommerkiarios of the first reign of Justinian II, attested from 690/91 to 695/96.[115]

(f) In the same year 694/95 this George apo hypaton was also the kommerkiarios (or in charge of the apotheke) of at least some of the above provinces: of the theme of Armeniakon (which contained both Cappadocias) and of Asia, Caria, and Lycia.

(g) None of the seals has the imprint of burlap.

The word ἀνδράποδον means "slave." In order to make the seals fit with Ostrogorsky's interpretation, it has been necessary to turn to the word's original meaning, "prisoner of war,"[116] in spite of the fact that this original meaning had been forgotten long before the end of the seventh century.

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[111] K. Regling in *Altertümer von Pergamon,* I (Berlin, 1913), 333.

[112] Zacos-Veglery, 190 (table 33) and nos. 186–188, 2764. This group of seals has attracted the attention of Aikaterine Christophilopoulou, Βυζαντινὴ Ἱστορία, II (Athens, 1981), 365–67; she interpreted them as indicating that Justinian created a unique command for the Slavs. But this interpretation does not explain the word *andrapoda.* Different interpretation by Hendy: see above, note 12.

[113] Zacos-Veglery, no. 188.

[114] Zacos-Veglery, no. 187 and note; cf. also *Dated Seals,* no. 24.

[115] Zacos-Veglery, 152–53 (table 8).

Let us return to the deeds of Justinian II and of the Slavs, as they are reported in the Chronicle of Theophanes. In the year 688/89 the emperor campaigned against the Slavs and the Bulgars and forced his way to Thessalonica; "he took great numbers of Slavs, partly as prisoners of war, partly because they submitted to him (τὰ μὲν πολέμῳ, τὰ δὲ προσρυέντα), made them cross at Abydos and settled them in the Opsikion."[117] This transfer must have happened in 688/89 or the following year 689/90, that is, four or five years before the carving of the seal of George apo hypaton. It is hard to imagine that the name *andrapoda*, if it meant "prisoners of war," survived by five years the settlement of these Slavs and their enrollment in the imperial army.

Moreover, the same Chronicle of Theophanes tells us that in order to fight the Arabs in 691/92 Justinian raised among these newly settled Slavs an army of thirty thousand (the figure is probably exaggerated but all the same indicative of the numerical importance of the transplanted population); he called them "the Chosen People" (λαὸν περιούσιον) and appointed as their chief one of their own by the name of Neboulos. It is clear that here we have an army that the emperor considered an élite, tried to flatter, and somehow trusted, since he appointed a Slav to head it. There is no mention of andrapoda or of George apo hypaton. But things turned sour in the war: the Arabs managed to bribe Neboulos, who went over to their side together with twenty thousand Slavs thus provoking the defeat of the Byzantines at Sebastopolis in Armenia. The emperor, enraged at the defeat, took revenge upon the Slavs that were left behind (τὸ τούτων ἐγκατάλειμμα), together with their women and children. At the steep cliffs of Leukates, in the gulf of Nikomedeia (i.e., in Bithynia), he had them killed—or uprooted:[118] the historian uses here the word ἀνεῖλεν, the common meaning of which is "killed" but which can also mean "uprooted." It is possible that some executions or massacres of Slavs may have occurred in order to quell the emperor's thirst for revenge; but of course one cannot believe that a whole population of thousands had been exterminated while they were at the emperor's mercy and could be used in a more productive—and profitable—way: be sold as slaves.

The Byzantine defeat of Sebastopolis occurred in summer 692. The emperor's revenge may have taken place in 693 and 694. Before the beginning of the eighth indiction, that is, before 1 September 694 George apo hypaton had a seal carved, on which he mentioned the Slav slaves of the province of Bithynia. It is too much of a coincidence not to link the two facts closely: George was in charge of selling the Bithynian Slavs on behalf of the state (who was their owner, since they had been "confiscated" by imperial order). This was a big operation since it must have involved several thousand individuals. One underpopulated province (since it needed new settlers) could not by any means absorb them all. So George was granted the concession to exercise this same trade in several other provinces. One may even suppose that, at least for once, these concessions were granted to the individuals who already had farmed the kommerkion of those provinces[119]—and, consequently, that the network in place for the sale of silk and other precious materials may have been used, at least partly,[120] for this mammoth sale of slaves, organized on behalf of the Byzantine emperor, in the year 694/95. This procedure also explains why the imperial portrait appears on the seals of those who operated the business: it guaranteed that the sale was properly authorized; probably, the seals were placed at the bottom of the deed of sale accompanying each slave, if not directly on his chains.

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[116] Zacos-Veglery, 266.

[117] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. De Boor, I, 364; cf. Ostrogorsky, *History*, 116–17; and Martha Gregoriou-Ioannidou, Ἡ ἐκστρατεία τοῦ Ἰουστινιανοῦ Β' κατὰ τῶν Βουλγάρων καὶ Σλάβων (688), Βυζαντιακὰ 2 (1982), 111–24.

[118] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, I, 366; cf. Ostrogorsky, *History*, 118. The transplanted Slavs were settled by the Arabs in Syria, a detail that might indicate that these soldiers followed the army together with (at least some of) their families (otherwise one may have to assume that all twenty thousand of them were definitely fed up with their family lives and that they deliberately abandoned their women and children in the hands of the emperor whom they betrayed—but this is highly unlikely).

[119] Or: the businessmen who had the capital and the contacts necessary to farm the job of kommerkiarioi rushed, bidded, and obtained this new means of quickly enriching themselves even more.

[120] It has to be noted, though, that the enumeration of the provinces is not exactly the same on the slave seals and on the kommerkiarios seals of George; this would indicate that bidding for the slave business was done independently from bidding for an apotheke of kommerkiarios.

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IX

DE L'IMPÔT DE DISTRIBUTION À L'IMPÔT DE QUOTITÉ À PROPOS DU PREMIER CADASTRE BYZANTIN (7e—9e SIÈCLE)

L'imposition par *indictiones* caractérise les finances de l'empire au 4e siècle. Il s'agissait d'un système fondé sur la repartition du fardeau fiscal aux contribuables en partant d'une évaluation de l'ensemble des besoins — donc, de la somme totale jugée nécessaire par le préfet du prétoire au moment de l'établissement du budget annuel. En tenant compte des contributions des années précédentes, le fonctionnaires du fisc ou les fermiers d'impôt distribuaient ce fardeau aux diocèses, qui le repartissaient aux provinces, et ainsi de suite jusqu'à ce qu'on établisse les obligations de chaque individu. Des unités comme le *jugum* et le *caput* étaient utilisées pour établir l'assiette de l'impôt au niveau du contribuable individuel — donc, on appliquait la methode fondamentalement plus équitable de la repartition par estimation proportionnelle aux fortunes. Cependant le principe même de la repartition conduisait vers un impôt lourd, de caractere souvent forfaitaire et, par conséquent, rarement revisé.[1] Il s'agissait clairement d'un impôt de distribution, où l'administration établissait d'abord ce que l'impôt direct devrait lui rapporter au total et procédait par la suite à la recherche des contribuables qui s'en acquitteraient un régime qui pouvait être injuste pour le contribuable mais qui était simple à administrer et qui, théoriquement, garantissait le maintien des rentrées fiscales à un niveau élevé, proche de celui qui était désirable. Dans la pratique, le système, fondé sur des estimations ou déclarations imprécises ou contestables, pouvait être lourd pour les contribuables, mais risquait aussi de ne pas du tout taxer plusieurs ressources.

Depuis le règne d'Anastase Ier, la tendance se manifeste et s'accentue de percevoir les impôts, et notamment l'impôt foncier, en espèces plutôt qu'en nature. Il faut cependant souligner que cette monétarisation du regime fiscal a dû s'opérer graduellement et de façon inégale selon les régions. En 687 l'annone en nature était encore perçue des domaines pontificaux de Bruttium et de la Lucanie.[2] Mais sous Léon III, le gros des impôts, sans doute dans

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[1] La fiscalité protobyzantine a fait couler beaucoup d'encre. Voici quelques travaux spécialisés relativement récents, où l'on trouvera les indications bibliographiques nécessaires: A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire I*, Oxford 1964, p. 119—120, 206—207, 235—237, 284, 295, 444—469; J. Karayannopulos, *Das Finanzwesen des frühbyzantinischen Staates*, Munich 1958, *passim*; W. Goffart, *Caput and Colonate, Towards a History of Late Roman Taxation*, Toronto 1974, *passim*; P. Lemerle, *The Agrarian History of Byzantium from the Origins to the Twelfth Century*, Galway 1979, p. 1—26.

[2] *Liber Pontificalis*, éd. L. Duchesne, réimpr. Paris 1955, I, p. 369.

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les parties les plus développées du point de vue économique, était perçu en espèces, puisque cet empereur aurait inventé une surtaxe pour la réparation des murs de Constantinople, calculée, nous dit le chroniqueur, en raison d'un miliaresion par nomisma d'or d'impôt — une surtaxe de 8,33% qui est probablement à l'origine du *dikeraton*, bien attesté à partir du 9e siècle.[3] Mais je crois que la monétarisation des contributions ne fut généralisée que sous le règne de Constantin V: les chroniqueurs, qui le détestaient pour ses convictions iconoclastes, nous informent qu'en 769, cet empereur, comme un «nouveau Midas» qui aimait les métaux précieux, a thésaurisé l'or; de ce fait les agriculteurs auraient été écrasés parce qu'ils auraient dû vendre leurs produits à bas prix afin de faire face à leurs obligations fiscales; le patriarche Nicéphore ajoute même le commentaire que les simples d'esprit parlaient alors d'abondance, tandis qu'en réalité c'était là un acte de tyran avare et inhumain.[4]

Il me semble clair que nous avons ici une mesure nouvelle, au moins en ce qui concerne son application générale; une mesure motivée par le désir d'accaparer pour le fisc autant d'or que possible, ce qui expliquerait les accusations des chroniqueurs; une mesure qui a choqué les gens de l'époque: le fait qu'elle est mentionnée comme quelque chose d'exceptionnel, et qu'on lui ait attribué des conséquences économiques graves, permet de supposer qu'auparavant les impôts pouvaient éventuellement être acquittés (en partie ?) en nature, et que l'application de cette mesure inonda le marché de produits agricoles qui ne pouvaient pas être facilement absorbés dans un temps limité, ce qui choqua vendeurs et acheteurs et provoqua la chute des prix. D'autre part, à partir du règne de Constantin V, tous les textes que nous avons affirment constamment que l'impôt foncier était toujours payé à Byzance en espèces, et notamment en pièces d'or.[5] C'est le procédé qui, raffiné et développé, sera connu sous le nom de *charagma* pendant la période mésobyzantine.[6]

La dernière mention indiscutable d'un impôt de répartition à Byzance me semble dater de 710. Justinien II prépara une flotte contre Cherson, la finançant par une imposition extraordinaire qu'il répartit sur tous les habitants de Constantinople: ἀπὸ διανομῆς τῶν οἰκούντων τὴν πόλιν συγκλητικῶν τε καὶ ἐργαστηριακῶν καὶ δημοτῶν καὶ παντὸς ὀφφικίου.[7] Mais ceci est un cas particulier puisqu'il s'agit d'une dépense extraordinaire visant à financer une campagne précise; par conséquent, l'utilisation du procédé ne peut d'aucune façon être considérée comme étant le reflet de pratiques qui étaient encore régulières. Par contre nous avons des textes montrant que déjà avant cette date Byzance avait adopté les principes fondamentaux d'un impôt de quotité.

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[3] Théophanis, *Chronographia*, éd. C. de Boor, Leipzig 1883, p. 412. Que le *dikeraton* remonte à cette surtaxe de Léon III est aussi dit par l'auteur du traité fiscal de la Marcienne; F. Dölger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der byzantinischen Finanzverwaltung besonders des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig 1927, p. 122, 1. 20—21. Mais rien n'est certain, étant donné qu'une autre surtaxe de deux kératia fut inventée au début du 9e siècle, cf. *infra*, note 33.

[4] Nicéphore, patriarche de Constantinople, *Opuscula Historica*, éd. C. de Boor, Leipzig 1886, p. 76; Théophanis; *Chronographia*, p. 446. Cf. Lemerle, *Agrarian History*, p. 50, note 2 (qui y voit une simple exaction de la part des agents du fisc).

[5] Ainsi, dans la lettre de Théodore Studite de 801, que nous allons analyser ci-dessous, les impôts sont exprimés en «talents d'or»: Migne, *PG* 99, c. 932.

[6] Le *charagma* a été étudié pour une époque plus tardive par N. Svoronos, *Recherches sur le cadastre byzantin et la fiscalité auf XIe et XIIe siècles*, Athènes — Pariz 1959 (tiré à part du *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 83), p. 77 et suiv.

[7] Theophanis, *Chronographia*, p. 377.

Ce genre d'impôt a un rapport global incertain, alors que c'est la quotité de chaque contribuable qui en constitue l'élément défini. Il est fondamentalement plus équitable que l'impôt de répartition, particulièrement si l'état essaie de l'asseoir de façon proportionnelle sur les fortunes des contribuables. C'est ce que les Byzantins faisaient certainement au 11e siècle; ils s'y prenaient en appliquant le système qu'on appelle aujourd'hui d'allivrement — d'après le modèle anglais — et qui est fondé sur le principe que l'impôt doit correspondre à un pourcentage (4,166% au cas byzantin) de la valeur des biens et des moyens de production que possède le contribuable, cette valeur «fiscale» étant fixée par les agents du fisc selon certains barèmes préétablis, qui tiennent compte de la quantité et, dans une certaine mesure, de la qualité de ces biens.[8] Ce regime de taxation reposait au 11e siècle sur un cadastre détaillé comportant le relevé parcellaire de toutes (en théorie, au moins) les terres cultivées de l'empire, et qui était continuellement révisé par les administrateurs fiscaux des provinces. L'existence de tels codices cadastraux, attestée au 10e siècle, remonte certainement bien avant le règne de Léon VI le Sage (886—912), qui aurait utilisé ces ἔξω κώδικες pour mieux organiser les exemptions fiscales que ses prédécésseurs avaient accordées aux grands des provinces.[9]

Or, pour qu'il y ait impôt de quotité, il fallait que l'état dispose de renseignements détaillés sur ses contribuables, donc qu'il fasse faire des enquêtes systématiques et parfois compliquées par un personnel qualifié: recensement des personnes, ce qui est un fondement essentiel de toute tentative d'établir une capitation, connaissance précise de la masse des fortunes foncières des particuliers, ce qui est indispensable pour connaître la quotité de chacun — autrement dit, idéalement, il aurait fallu qu'il y ait un cadastre. Or, ceci est un instrument fiscal dont la compilation est longue et fastidieuse.

Nous ne savons pas quand Byzance s'est dotée d'un cadastre. Il paraît que l'absence d'un tel document détaillé et tenu à jour aurait poussé les empereurs du 3e siècle à adopter l'assiette simplifiée, fondée sur le concept abstrait et variable du *jugum*.[10] Et rien ne dit que des recencements étendus ont été effectués par la suite. Le fait que les Digestes (50, 15, 4) reprennent les instructions d'Ulpien concernant la rédaction d'un codex cadastral parcellaire ne signifie point que Justinien se fut engagé à faire rédiger un tel cadastre, encore moins qu'il ait accompli cette tâche.[11] D'ailleurs, même si un tel document avait existé au 6^{e} siècle, il aurait difficilement pû survivre aux bouleversements du 7^{e}, notamment aux invasions arabes ou avaroslaves. Car, un cadastre a une certaine valeur seulement dans la mesure où il est bien tenu et mis à jour.

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[8] Le texte fondamental du 11e siècle est publié par E. Schilbach, *Byzantinische metrologische Quellen*, Thessalonique 1982, p. 59—60 et traduit en français par J. Lefort, Fiscalité médiévale et informatique: Recherche sur les barèmes pour l'imposition des paysans byzantins au XIVe siècle, *Revue Historique* 512 (1974), p. 320, note 2. Je crois avoir montré que ce texte deterait très probablement du règne de Michel IV (1034—1041): Terres du fisc et revenu de la terre aux 10e—11e siècles, dans *Les hommes et les richesses II*. Le rapport 1:24 entre la valeur des biens et l'impôt est confirmé par le traité fiscal de Zavorda: J. Karayannopulos, Fragmente aus dem Vademecum eines byzantinischen Finanzbeamten, *Polychronion, Festschrift F. Dölger*, Heidelberg 1966, p. 322.

[9] F. Dölger, *Beiträge...*, p. 117. Pour le cadastre byzantin, connu surtout au 11e siècle, on consultera Svoronos, *Cadastre*, surtout p. 57 et suiv.

[10] G. Ardant, *Historie de l'impôt*, Paris 1971, p. 137—138. Ajoutons que l'hypothèse voulant que les empereurs romains de l'époque classique se soient dotés d'un véritable cadastre pour tout l'empire en ordonnant un «Reichscensus», est maintenant très sérieusement mise en doute: Goffart, *Caput*, p. 107.

[11] Svoronos, *Cadastre*, p. 57, note 3 signale un document décrivant l'état parcellaire d'une région d'Egypte; mais ce document est postérieur à la conquête arabe: R. Remondon, *Papyrus grecs d'Apollonos Anô*, Le Caire 1953, p. 155—162.

En son absence, une imposition proportionnelle ne pouvait être fondée que sur les déclarations des contribuables, soumises à vérification de la part des autorités. Lactance nous a laissé une description vivante, bien que sans doute exagérée, des procédés (qui comprenaient la torture et les fausses accusations) que les fonctionnaires du début du 4^{e} siècle employaient justement pour vérifier les déclarations fiscales des contribuables.[12] A ce moment là le fisc s'effoçait d'établir les principes d'une répartition équitable de l'impôt parmi les contribuables. Trois siècles plus tard, les méthodes restaient les mêmes, mais les victimes avaient changé: c'est ce que semblent montrer les chroniqueurs du premier regne de Justinien II (685—695).

Malgré l'interdiction canonique concernant l'exercice de charges laiques par des ecclésiastiques, Justinien II avait confié les finances de l'empire à un moine, Théodotos, nommé au poste de logothète du *génikon*. C'était un homme terrible, qui faisait tout pour augmenter les recettes de l'état et qui se rendit tellement impopulaire que la populace l'a brûlé vif lors de la chute de Justinien en 695. Quels étaient ses méfaits? Il tâchait d'extorquer de l'argent non seulement de ses subordonnés (Nicéphore), à savoir les collecteurs d'impôt (Théophane), mais aussi des grands de Constantinople; pour ce faire, il utilisait la torture, en plaçant ses victimes au dessus d'une fumée de chaume. Ces mesures ont été interprêtées comme un effort délibéré des autorités pour contrôler et même pour écraser la grande propriété terrienne, et pour mettre en place une reforme générale du système fiscal que les savants ont attribué au regne de Justinien II.[13] J'ai mes doutes concernant l'aspect supposément «social» de cette politique. La torture des riches pourrait aussi bien être, au pire, une simple mesure d'extorsion, au mieux, une tentative de s'assurer que ceux-ci déclareraient tous leurs avoirs et par conséquent assumeraient entièrement la part de l'impôt qui leur revenait. Déjà cette dernière hypothèse nous place dans un système fiscal qui semble fondé sur la quotité. Mais je crois que cette hypothèse devient une certitude lorsqu'on constate que les principales victimes du moine Théodotos étaient ses propres employés, les percepteurs du fisc. En effet, leur mise à la question n'aurait aucun sens s'il s'agissait de la répartition de l'impôt, étant donné que dans ce cas leur engagement total envers l'état n'avait point besoin d'être démontré — ce total aurait été le point de départ des exigences fiscales pour l'année. Par contre, il est clair pourquoi des mesures rudes et inhabituelles auraient été utilisées lors de la collecte d'un impôt de quotité, surtout dans un stade initial où le système n'était pas encore rodé: le gouvernement ignorait au départ quel serait le rapport global de chaque province puisque ce rapport dépendait du nombre et des facultés contributives des habitants. Or ces deux éléments, en l'absence d'un cadastre, n'étaient pas connus d'avance, et étaient hautement sujets à modification d'une année à l'autre en des temps aussi troubles que ceux que traversait Byzance à la fin du 7^{e} siècle. Voilà ce qui ouvrait les portes à toutes sortes d'abus et de fraudes de la part des collecteurs d'impôts, dont les déclarations constituaient pour le fisc la principale source de renseignements sur les provinces; on peut donc voir comment la torture fut utilisée par Théodotos afin de limiter ces fraudes et d'assurer la rentrée «normale» (et, en tout cas, abondante) des recettes fiscales.

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[12] Lactance, *De mortibus persecutorum*, ch. XXIII.

[13] Nicéphore, p. 37, 39; Théophanis, *Chronographia* I, p. 367, 369. Cf. Constance Head, *Justinian II of Byzantium*, Madison Wisconsin 1972, p. 88—91 (avec indications bibliographiques).

Une sorte d'impôt de quotité est aussi sous-entendu dans la Loi Agraire, qui aurait été rédigée entre le 6e et le 8e siècles et dans laquelle on trouve la description de la commune rurale byzantine.[14] Au paragraphe 18, est envisagé le cas de terres qui ont été abandonnées par leur propriétaire légal; elles seront exploitées par celui qui en paie l'impôt foncier: c'est là un principe fondamental de la responsabilité fiscale collective. Mais dans le paragraphe 19, il est question du paysan qui, tout en ayant quitté ses terres, continue à payer l'impôt qui les grève; dans ce cas, les personnes qui exploitent les terres abandonnées (et qui ne paient pas d'impôt parce que c'est le fuyard qui s'en acquitte) devront le rembourser au double. Ce qui signifie, qu'en acquittant les impôts le fuyard maintient tous ses droits de propriétaire sur ses biens et, par conséquent, celui qui les exploite, même en son absence, doit lui verser une rente, comptée, comme c'est normal, au double de l'impôt.[15] Comme tous agissent dans ce cas de bonne foi, il n'y a pas de punition: il s'agit seulement d'évaluer *a posteriori* ce que serait une rente équitable. Cette procédure serait impossible dans une fiscalité de répartition (le fuyard ne peut pas savoir le montant de sa part d'impôt avant que la repartition ne soit faite au village même qu'il aurait quitté) alors qu'elle est très concevable dans un système d'impôt de quotité.[16]

Au 7e et au 8e siècles, les gouvernements de Constantinople faisaient des efforts considérables pour recenser la population de l'empire en vue d'asseoir la capitation sur des bases solides: Constant II (+668) et plus tard Léon III sont connus pour avoir fait des recensements et imposé des capitations en Italie méridionale et en Sicile — sans doute en y appliquant un statut fiscal déjà connu dans la partie orientale de l'empire. Léon III (732) aurait en plus ordonné que tout enfant mâle soit enregistré dès sa naissance, ce qui pourrait être vu (je souligne le conditionnel, car nous savons si peu sur la capitation d'avant le 8e siècle) comme une mesure conduisant vers le fouage, étant donné que la capitation toucherait maintenant seulement les chefs de famille effectifs ou potentiels et non point tous les habitants de l'empire.[17] D'ailleurs il semble bien que le fouage des Byzantins, le *kapnikon*, attesté pour la première fois au tout début du 9e siècle comme ayant existé longtemps avant cette première mention, était alors une contribution annuelle à quote indifférenciée de 2 miliaresia par ménage de cultivateurs.[18] Quoi qu'il en soit, le passage de la capitation au fouage refléterait un politique plus équitable, qui diminuait l'importance relative de l'impôt à quote indifférenciée frappant les individus, dans la mesure que ceux-ci seraient taxés seulement s'ils constituaient une unité de production à part — une famille avec domicile et champs séparés.

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[14] Dernière édition commentée par I. Medvedev, *Vizantijskij zemledel'ceskij zakon*, Leningrad 1984.

[15] Le principe que l'impôt correspond normalement à la moitié de la rente est encore attesté au 11e siècle: Schilbach, *Byz. Metr. Quellen*, p. 60, 1.7—10.

[16] Dans les *Actes d'Iviron* I, éd. J. Lefort, N. Oikonomidès, Denise Papachryssanthou, Paris 1985, no. 10, nous rencontrons en 996 un cas de paysans Macédoniens qui avaient abandonné leurs terres de peur des incursions bulgares, mais qui continuaient à verser à l'état les impôts et charges dont ils étaient redevables au titre de ces terres abandonnées.

[17] *Liber Pontificalis* I, p. 344; Théophanis, *Chronographia* I, p. 410.

[18] Théophanis, *Chronographia* I, p. 487, cf. aussi *infra*; Théophane Continué, éd. Bonn, p. 54 (regne de Michel II, 820—829).

Le recensement de la population sert de base pour des impôts comme la capitation ou le fouage. C'est un premier pas vers les quotes proportionnelles aux fortunes dans la mesure où il fournit à l'administration une première liste des contribuables potentiels. Mais pour estimer les fortunes en partant de cette liste, il faudrait bien se fonder, au moins dans un premier temps, aux déclarations des contribuables. Pour faire ceci de façon quelque peu efficace, d'autres moyens devaient être mis en oeuvre, des moyens comportant inévitablement un système de preuve.

Des informations très importantes bien que négligées concernant les pratiques fiscales de la fin du 8e siècle se trouvent dans une lettre panégyrique que Théodore Studite adressa à l'impératrice Irène pour la féliciter des allégements fiscaux qu'elle avait accordés aux citoyens de l'empire. La lettre date certainement de 801.[19] En effet, en mars de cette année, Irène aurait, selon Théophane, remis tous les impôts des habitants de la Ville et allégé les *kommerkia* que payaient aux détroits de part et d'autre de Constantinople ceux qui y apportaient des marchandises par voie de mer.[20] Or, la lettre de Théodore Studite contient des références directes justement à ces mesures: il y est question des navigateurs qui ne sont plus étranglés aux détroits,[21] il est aussi question d'avantages fiscaux non précisés dont bénéficieraient les marchands de porcs, d'agneaux, de vin; les bouchers, les tisserands, les forgerons, les cordonniers, les tanneurs, les parfumiers, les constructeurs, et tous ceux qui travaillent l'or, le bois, ou toute autre matière première. Il s'agit des divers groupes de commerçants et artisans de la capitale, principaux bénéficiaires de tout allégement fiscal touchant les villes. La date de la lettre ne fait point de doute, à mon avis, d'autant plus qu'Irène fut détrônée un an plus tard, en 802.

Mais Théodore Studite parle aussi d'autres remises fiscales, qui auraient été accordées par Irène plus tôt dans son regne. Il parle des femmes des soldats qui ne subissaient plus le fardeau fiscal de la *strateia* lorsqu'elles perdaient leurs maris.[22] Il mentionne les chasseurs et les pêcheurs qui ne devaient plus fournir le tiers de leur prise à l'état (comme droit pour l'exploitation de la forêt ou de la mer).[23] Il se félicite du fait que des péages n'étaient plus perçus sur les routes terrestres ou maritimes; que les gardiens des passages montagneux n'avaient plus le droit de taxer, voire piller, les passants, obligeant ainsi les paysans à ne plus se hasarder du côté de la mer ou des villes.[24] Mais

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[19] Lettre publiée dans Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 99, c. 929—933. Elle a attiré l'attention de J. B. Bury, *A History of the Eastern Roman Empire from the Fall of Irène to the Accession of Basil I*, London 1912, p. 2—4, 212.

[20] Théophanis, *Chronographia* I, p. 475.

[21] Migne, *PG* 99, c. 932. J'ai exposé ce que je pense de cette clause et du *kommerkion* au 9e siecle dans «Le kommerkion d'Abydos, Thessalonique et le commerce bulgare au 9e siècle», qui sera publié dans *Hommes et Richesses* II.

[22] J'ai analysé ce texte, très important pour l'historie des biens militaires à Byzance, dans «Middle-byzantine provincial recruits: salary, armament» à paraître dans la *Festschrift Westerink*.

[23] Cf. mes remarques dans Terres du fisc..., *loc. cit.*

[24] Intéressant passage montrant les système de défense et de police des campagnes prévalant au 8e siècle et rappelant les *armatoloi* d'une époque plus tardive.

Théodore insiste surtout sur le fait que la population avait admirablement été exemptée de paiements de plusieurs talanta d'or; et que cet allégement était arrivé en même temps qu'une source d'injustice fut abolie; on fut libéré de l'étau des anciens impôts qui nuisaient à l'âme (ψυχοφθόρων ἀπαιτημάτων), que les prédécesseurs d'Irène n'avaient pas corrigés, malgré le fait que certains d'entr'eux avaient été des souverains orthodoxes (donc d'avant l'iconoclasme). Et Théodore précise:

«Sont finies les prestations de serment, les nombreux serments ou, plutôt, les faux serments pour les collecteurs d'impôt aussi bien que pour les contribuables; car il arrivait que les deux perdent leur âme de ce fait, l'un parce qu'il essayait de cacher tout ce qu'il pourrait, l'autre l'assiégeant pour en tirer le maximum.

C'est fini l'écrasement de ceux qui sont à l'étroit; c'est fini le travail supplémentaire des pauvres, qui avait pour but non point de les guérir de la pauvreté — ceci ne serait pas triste — mais plutôt de leur permettre de payer aux agents du fisc cette contribution qui ne peut pas être combinée avec les autres (ἀσύνθετον) et qui est introduite depuis longtemps (dans le système fiscal) comme un rejeton du pêché».[25]

Deux points doivent être relevés dans ce texte concernant le système d'imposition. Dans le premier paragraphe il est question de serments, eventuellement de faux serments, que les contribuables et les collecteurs d'impôt échangent dans leur effort de limiter ou augmenter le montant de l'impôt à payer; c'est une procédure qui fait penser aux déclarations d'impôt de l'antiquité romaine — et de nos jours — avec la différence que les byzantins du 8e siècle ne taxaient pas le revenu, mais plutôt la valeur des biens. On est par conséquent amené à croire que c'était là la procédure que l'on suivait alors pour établir quelles étaient les propriétés imposables de chaque contribuable; la preuve, dans un sens ou dans l'autre, serait faite par serment. Or, ces renseignements de la lettre de Théodore Studite doivent être rapprochés d'une curieuse novelle d'Irène, dont le préambule annonce que le serment est aboli mais dont le texte décrit comment et avec quelles formules le serment juridique doit être prêté pour des questions d'authenticité de documents ou de propriétés terriennes.[26] On peut donc comprendre que cette novelle, comme tant d'autres lois byzantines, avait aussi — et surtout — une signification restrictive, c'est à dire qu'elle autorisait la prestation de serments aux cas décrits dans son texte et l'interdisait dans tous les cas qui n'y étaient pas mentionnés.

La preuve fiscale par serment aurait donc été abolie par Irène. Il est possible qu'elle ne fut jamais réinstaurée.[27] Par contre, la declaration d'impôt assermentée avait sans doute existé longtemps avant le regne d'Irène, peut être déjà sous le Haut Empire Romain. On se demandera même si ce n'est pas à ce genre de serment que fait allusion Théophane lorsqu'il nous dit que Constantin V punissait en tant que son ennemi toute personne «qui ne prêtait pas serment sans retenue».[28] Mais le contexte de cette phrase est ambigu.

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[25] Migne, *PG* 99, c. 932.

[26] L. Burgmann, Die Novellen der Kaiserin Eirene, *Fontes Minores* 4 (1981), p. 18—25, cf. p. 28 et suiv.

[27] Bien entendu, le serment a survécu comme moyen de tirer des aveux de la part de particuliers en vue d'actions plus arbitraires, comme, par exemple, dans le cas de la confiscation des biens d'un cirier, que décrit Théophane (*Chronographia* I, p. 487—488).

[28] Théophanis, *Chronographia* I, p. 442.

Le deuxième point mentionné dans le passage de Théodore Studite est moins clair. Il s'agit d'un impôt qui écrase les pauvres et les fait travailler en temps supplémentaire[29] pour s'en acquitter, un impôt «qui ne peut pas être combiné», sans doute avec leurs autres obligations fiscales. De ce qui nous savons, le seul impôt qui frappait tous au 9e siècle à taux unique, c'était le fouage (*kapnikon*), dont nous avons parlé ci-dessus, et qui était en effet conçu comme un versement à part, nettement distingué de l'impôt foncier. Comme tout impôt à quote indifférenciée, il était lourd pour les économiquement faibles. Or, Irène avait en effet exempté les parèques des institutions pieuses du versement du *kapnikon*, et ce justement à la dernière année de son regne.[30] Il me semble donc probable que ce passage de Théodore concerne justement ce fouage et l'exemption qui en fut accordée par Irène.

Le successeur d'Irène était un logothète du *génikon*, très expérimenté en matière de finances. Sa politique de rigueur fiscale dirigée particulièrement contre les privilèges de l'église, a beaucoup déplu à Théophane le Confesseur, qui l'a surtout décrite sous la forme d'une liste de dix «vexations».[31] Mais les historiens modernes y ont vu des mesures visant le réglement de problèmes politiques et sociaux et, avant tout, l'assainissement des finances publiques.[32]

Nous n'insisterons pas ici sur ce qui concerne les transplantations de populations, l'expansion de la grande propriété foncière, la limitation des privilèges des biens des puissants et de l'église, le financement de l'armée et de la marine de guerre ou de la marine marchande; nous nous arrêterons seulement aux mesures qui concernent la perception de l'impôt direct. Une révision générale du cadastre a été ordonnée: les fonctionnaires recensaient les biens de tous, en augmentaient l'impôt, et percevaient en plus deux *keratia* (par nomisma?) pour couvrir les frais d'administration.[33] D'autre part, le chroniqueur insiste sur le fait que les impôts étaient augmentés de façon générale, ce qui signifie que le barème en avait été modifié. Or cette modification de barème conduisit, nous dit toujours Théophane, à ce que les meilleurs biens des maisons pieuses leur fussent enlevés pour être rattachés à ceux de la couronne, sans qu'il y ait diminution correspondante du fardeau fiscal; de sorte que plusieurs fondations et leur parèques ont vu leurs impôts doubler alors que leur terrain d'habitation et de culture rétrecissait.[34]

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[29] J'avoue que cette interprétation du terme φροντιστήρια ne me satisfait pas pleinement parce qu'il n'est pas attesté ailleurs. J'y reconnais la racine φροντίς, soin. D'autre part, d'après le contexte, ceci devrait être quelque chose de désagréable pour les pauvres, qui leur permettait de s'acquitter de leurs obligations fiscales (dons rapportait de l'argent) et qui autrement aurait pu les «guérir» de la pauvreté. L'interprétation de travail supplémentaire repond á toutes ces données.

[30] Ainsi on comprend mieux pourquoi son successeur Nicéphore exigea le *kapinkon* des parèques des fondations ecclésiastiques retroactivement à partir de la première année de son propre regne.

[31] Théophanis, *Chronographia* I, p. 486—487. L'intelligence et l'expérience de Nicéphore en matières fiscales et son désir de lever le maximum d'impôts possibles sont aussi mentionnés dans le Récit anonyme sur les martyrs de 811 (éd. I. Dujcev, dans *Travaux et Mémoires* 1, 1965, p. 216).

[32] Les dix vexations ont été étudiées systématiquement (avec analyse des interprétations antérieures) par Aikaterine Christophilopoulou, 'Η οἰκονομικὴ καὶ δημοσιονομικὴ πολιτικὴ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Νικηφόρου Α', Τόμος εἰς μνήμην Κωνσταντίνου 'Αμάντου, Athènes 1960, p. 413—431. Cf. du même auteur, Βυζαντινὴ 'Ιστορία II, Athènes 1981, p. 166—171.

[33] Théophanis, *Chronographia* I, p. 486. L'introduction de cette surtaxe de 8,33% sur l'impôt de base (le *dikeraton*? cf. note 3) indique qu'il s'agissait la d'une opération de revision importante: en outre, je crois que cette révision a coincidé avec l'introduction du papier dans l'administration byzantine: d'où le terme *chartiatika*: cf. mes remarques dans Le support matériel des documents byzantins, *La Paléographie grecque et byzantine*, Paris 1977, p. 397—398. Mon interprétation de ce passage est proche de celle proposée par Christophilopoulou.

Il me semble hors de doute que nous avons ici l'application du procédé de l'*hikanôsis*, bien connu grâce au Traité Fiscal de la Marcienne (12^e^ siècle) et au texte métrologique du 11^e^ siècle (Michel IV, 1034—1041), comme étant le fondement du système de l'*épibolé*.[35] Il était utilisé lors des revisions du cadastre afin de connaître «la quantité de terre qu'a le droit de détenir un contribuable payant une somme x d'impôt». Autrement dit, le recenseur, connaissant l'impôt effectivement payé ou payable par le contribuable ainsi que le coefficient de l'imposition, vérifiait si le contribuable n'était pas en possession d'une terre dont la valeur était supérieure à celle qui correspondait à l'impôt qu'il payait. Tout éventuel surplus était déclaré une *perisseia* et lui était retiré pour être attribué au fisc: c'est bien ce que subirent les maisons pieuses au temps de Nicéphore I^er^ à cause de l'augmentation du coefficient de l'imposition (qui automatiquement faisait diminuer la quantité de terre que chaque contribuable avait le droit de détenir)[36] mais surtout à cause de l'abolition de tous les privilèges de ces institutions, dont les biens étaient maintenant mesurés et les parèques recensés comme ceux de tout le monde.

Le procédé décrit dans ce texte montre clairement que nous sommes dans un système d'impôt de quotité accompli; en effet, la *hikanôsis*, qui inversait les rôles et considérait que le montant de l'impôt justifiait les droits de propriété et l'étendue de ces droits, constitue un véritable extrême dans le système d'impôt de quotité. On n'avait donc plus besoin de faire prêter serment par les contribuables pour établir la liste de leurs biens imposables. Il est fort possible que ce fût là le resultat d'un recensement qui aurait certainement été commencé bien avant le regne de Nicéphore, mais qui, sous son regne, serait enfin devenu l'élément principal de l'assiette de l'impôt foncier. D'ailleurs, un pas dans cette même direction — un pas qui présuppose l'existence d'un cadastre — aurait été la mesure d'Irène (certainement prise à un moment où ce même Nicéphore était en change des finances de l'empire en tant que logothète du *génikon*) abolissant le serment dans les déclarations d'impôt. Or, ce serment avait probablement servi auparavant à l'établissement même du cadastre. Car celui-ci contenait le relevé des terres cultivées ou autrement exploitées et non pas de toutes les terres de l'empire. Il était par conséquent toujours possible pour les contribuables d'augmenter l'étende leur exploitation par des défrichements ou par l'occupation de terres abandonnées sans payer les impôts afférants: d'où la nécessité de procéder à l'*hikanôsis*.

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[34] Théophanis, *Chronographia* I, p. 487: τὰ δὲ κρείττονα τῶν κτημάτων είς τὴν βασιλικὴν κουρατωρείαν άίρεσθαι, τὰ μέντοι τέλη αὐτῶν ἐπιτίθεσθαι τοῖς ἐναπομείνασιν είς τούς αὐτοὺς εὐαλεῖς όίκους κτήμασι καὶ παροίκοις, ὥστε διπλοῦσθαι πολλῶν τὰ τέλη, τῶν οἰκήσεων στενουμένων αὐτοῖς καί τῶν χωρίων.

[35] Cf. Dölger, *Beiträge...*, p. 132—133; Schilbach, *Byz, Metr. Quellen*, p. 60; Svoronos, *Cadastre*, p. 124—125. Cf. aussi mes remarques dans Ἡ Πεῖρα περὶ παροίκων, Ἀφιέρωμα, στο Nῖκο Σβορῶνο, Rethymno 1986, p. 232—241.

[36] Interprétation différente de cette mesure par Christophilopoulou, *loc. cit.*, qui y voit non pas une augmentation du coefficient mais plutôt des mesures de confiscation arbitraires, ayant touché les terres mais non pas les parèques des maisons pieuses.

L'équité fiscale était sans doute un important objectif de la politique radicale de Nicéphore I^{er}. Des informations à ce sujet nous sont fournies par Théophane, malgré son parti-pris évident. Dès qu'il a pris le pouvoir en 802, Nicéphore créa un tribunal, «méchant et injuste», au palais de la Magnaura «prétendant qu'il allait abolir l'injustice»; mais, commente Théophane, son but «n'était pas, comme les faits l'ont montré, de rendre justice aux pauvres; plutôt, il voulait par ce tribunal déshonorer les personnes en vue, les faire arrêter et leur prendre tout: c'est ce qu'il fit».[37] Je crois que ce passage doit être lu dans le contexte fiscal que nous avons décrit ci-dessus. Nicéphore créa un nouveau tribunal (je comprends: pour les affaires fiscales) prétendant qu'il voulait corriger les injustices; mais lorsque ce tribunal commença à fonctionner, on constata que les pauvres n'avaient pas beaucoup à en profiter (je suppose, parce qu'ils payaient déjà leur juste part et que cette part n'allait pas diminuer, surtout si le coéfficient de l'imposition était accru); par contre, les puissants, qui tenaient beaucoup plus de terre que ne justifiait l'impôt qu'ils payaient, ont vu le procédé de l'*hikanôsis* jouer contre eux; ce qu'ils détenaient en *perisseia*, leur fut enlevé pour être rattaché aux biens de la couronne. Ainsi, malgré les dénonciations de Théophane, justice était faite bel et bien; les puissants ont dû payer leur part, avec la différence que ce fut l'état dans son ensemble — et non pas les agriculteurs pauvres — qui en a profité.

Ceci aurait été l'aboutissement d'un long cheminement — la confection d'un cadastre prend plusieurs années — qui aurait commencé avec les recensements des personnes des 7^{e}—8^{e} siècles que nous avons mentionnés ci-dessus, et qui aurait abouti à la fin du 8^{e} siècle à un cadastre suffisamment complet et bien tenu pour permettre la construction des bases de cette nouvelle fiscalité byzantine de la période moyenne, fondée sur l'impôt proportionnel à la fortune du contribuable (y compris, de ce point de vue, même le *kapnikon* qui connaîtra au 11^{e} siècle deux taux, un pour les paysans aisés, un autre pour les pauvres). Ce serait là l'oeuvre essentiellement des premiers empereurs iconoclastes, dont la ferveur religieuse et l'effort pour sauver l'empire étaient combinés avec un esprit de réorganisation générale et une mentalité «puritaine» qui visaient le rétablissement de bases économiques et financières solides dans un contexte de hautes exigences morales (abolition de la vénalité des charges; des cadeaux faits aux juges; de la ferme des impôts ou des autres postes publics lucratifs, etc.). C'était, nous l'avons vu, ces empereurs, notamment Constantin V, qui auraient généralisé la perception de l'impôt direct en espèces assurant ainsi la monétarisation complète des finances de l'empire. Que leur effort pour la constitution d'un cadastre ait abouti juste au moment de la première restauration des images, c'était sans doute une coincidence qui peut paraître fâcheuse; mais même ici, il y a un symbolisme qui est peut-être plus significatif le système a finalement été mis en place au moment où le trône était occupé par un ancien fonctionnaire des finances, le dernier dans une série de bureaucrates inconnus de nous, qui ont contribué à la modernisation de la fiscalité de l'empire. Au 9^{e} siècle, Byzance avait un système d'impôt direct proportionnel aux fortunes, dont l'équivalent n'apparaîtra en

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[37] Théophanis, *Chronographia* I, p. 478—479: ὡς δῆθεν τὴν ἀδικίαν μέλλων ἐκκόπτειν τὸ πονηρὸν ἐν τῇ Μαγναύρα καὶ ἄδικον συνεστήσατο δικαστήριον σκοπὸς δὲ τῷ τυράννῳ οὐ τοῖς πτωχοῖς τὰ δίκαια ἀποδιδόναι, ὡς ἔδειξε τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ διὰ τούτου πάντας τοὺς ἐν τέλει ἀτιμάσαι τε καὶ αἰχμαλωτίσαι, καὶ εἰς ἑαυτὸν τὰ πάντα μετενεγκεῖν ὃ καὶ πεποίηκεν.

Europe occidentale qu'après le 12^e siècle.[38] Encore moins développé était le régime fiscal de la Bulgarie voisine.

Il n'y a pas de doute que le nouveau systeme améliora les recettes de l'état. La floraison byzantine de l'époque macédonienne ne pourrait être expliquée si l'état économique et financier de l'empire n'avait pas été amélioré. Si le budget de Théodora (842—856) était effectivement de beaucoup supérieur à celui d'Irène (780—802), comme il a été soutenu,[39] ceci aurait en partie été dû au travail silencieux et methodique des empereurs iconoclastes, ceux dont l'oeuvre religieuse fut annulée par ces deux impératrices. Ce ne serait d'ailleurs pas la seule fois où la bonne gestion et la collecte méthodique des impôts faite en tenant compte des moyens économiques des contribuables, aurait rendu des résultats positifs du point de vue financier.

Le nouveau système était-il fondé uniquement sur la quotité? La réponse serait un oui qùalifié. L'assiette de l'impôt était établie uniquement par quotité pour les grandes unités fiscales, les grands propriétaires *(prosopa)* ou les villages *(choria)*. Mais à l'intérieur de chacune de ces unités était appliqué le système de l'*épibolé*,[40] dont le but était d'assurer la rentrée des recettes de l'état grâce à la responsabilité fiscale collective qui est fondamentale pour la sauvegarde du fisc. Le principe de la répartition fractionnée était donc appliqué ici et ce de façon temporaire et limitée, car on prévoyait toujours des allégements fiscaux *(kouphismoi, sympatheiai)* en cas de catastrophe naturelle ou de départ des contribuables. Tout compte fait, le système fiscal méso-byzantin était raisonnable et, somme toute, équitable. C'est pourquoi il restera en vigueur et fonctionnera à merveille jusqu'à l'époque des Comnènes.

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[38] Voir Ardant, *Histoire de l'impôt*, p. 163 et suiv. L'amenuisement de l'importance de l'impôt en Europe mérovingienne et carolingienne contraste nettement avec les systèmes fiscaux de l'Orient, byzantins ou arabes. Cependant, le système d'imposition byzantin, tel qu'il s'établit dès le 9^e siècle, constitue sans doute un progrès notable et sera plus tard vu comme un modèle par les monarchies chrétiennes d'Occident. Faut-il rappeler qu'encore au 12^e siècle en Angleterre, au pays le plus avancé de l'Europe occidentale du point de vue fiscal, l'impôt foncier était assis sur la simple estimation/déclaration du contribuable, menacé de peines spirituelles et éventuellement contrôlé par ses voisins — autrement dit en appliquant des procédés que les Byzantins avaient abandonné dès la fin du 8^e siècle?

[39] W. Treadgold, *The Byzantine State Finances in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries*, New York 1982, p. 86.

[40] Au sujet de *l'épibolè* on consultera les travaux relativement recents de N. Svoronos: *Cadastre*, passim; L'épibolè à l'époque des Comnènes, *Travaux et Mémoires* 3 (1968), p. 375—395; et *Actes de Lavra* I, éd. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos, Denise Papachryssanthou, Paris 1970, p. 266.

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MIDDLE-BYZANTINE PROVINCIAL RECRUITS: SALARY AND ARMAMENT

The present article is divided into two parts. In the first are examined some texts concerning the payment of salaries to the theme soldiers in the ninth and tenth centuries; in the second, the focus turns to texts of the eighth century concerning soldiers of the provinces, who seem to have been recruited according to the same principles as those of the ninth and tenth centuries.

* * *

The farmer soldiers of the themes constituted an important part of the Byzantine armies, at least until the tenth century. They have been described as small land owners whose holdings were inscribed in the military registers, and who, in exchange for being exempted from secondary taxes and corvées, were obliged to serve in the province's army with their own horse(s) and armament — or, if this was for some reason impossible, they were obliged to make a cash payment to the State (στρατεία, with the fiscal meaning of the term).[1] The question of the salary that they would receive does not enter clearly in this picture, in spite of the fact that such salaries are well attested: ninth century sources, for instance, mention enemy raiders, the Bulgars and the Arabs, who managed to capture the salaries (ῥόγα) of the themes: once in the region of Strymon (809: 79200 gold coins) and once in the Armeniakoi (811: 93600 gold coins).[2]

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[1] Some relatively recent publications: P. Lemerle, *The Agrarian History of Byzantium from the Origins to the Twelfth Century* (Galway 1979) 115ff.; J. Haldon, *Recruitment and Conscription in the Byzantine Army c. 550-950: A Study on the Origins of the Stratiotika Ktemata* (Vienna 1979), passim.

[2] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. de Boor (Leipzig 1883) I, 484, 489.

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An important text, but difficult to explain, is preserved in the Book of Ceremonies of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos.[3] It has been commented upon by several scholars and, recently and extensively, by P. Yannopoulos.[4]

> ἰστέον ὅτι τὸ παλαιὸν τύπος ἦν τὰ θέματα ῥογεύεσθαι κατὰ τέσσαρα ἔτη, οἱονεὶ τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ ὁ Ἀνατολικός, ὁ Ἀρμενιακός, ὁ Θρᾳκήσιος· τῷ δὲ ἑτέρῳ χρόνῳ ὁ Ὀψικιανός, ὁ Βουκελλάριος, ὁ Καππάδοξ· τῷ δὲ ἄλλῳ χρόνῳ ὁ Χαρσιανίτης, ὁ Κολωνείας, ὁ Παφλαγωνίας· καὶ πάλιν τῷ ἑτέρῳ ὁ τῆς Θρᾴκης, ὁ Μακεδονίας, ὁ Χαλδίας. καὶ τῶν δ΄ χρόνων διελθόντων, πάλιν ἐρρογεύοντο τὰ ῥογευθέντα θέματα τῷ πρώτῳ χρόνῳ.

> One must know that in the past there was a formal arrangement according to which the themes received salaries every four years, that is: this year, the Anatolikon, the Armeniakon and the Thrakesion; the following year, the Opsikion, the Boukellarioi and Cappadocia; the year after, Charsianon, Koloneia and Paphlagonia; and the year after this, Thrace, Macedonia and Chaldia. And after the four years had elapsed, salaries were paid again to the themes that had been paid the first year.

Before proceeding to any further discussion, one has to give some explanations concerning the wording of the text: all the themes are mentioned by the name of their *strategos*: ὁ Ἀνατολικός means ὁ στρατηγὸς τῶν Ἀνατολικῶν, ὁ τῆς Θρᾴκης means ὁ στρατηγὸς τῆς Θρᾴκης, etc. In my translation, I have used instead the name of the theme because I understand that the *strategos* acted as an intermediary between the treasury and the soldiers; he received the global amount and distributed it to his subordinates. This is how all scholars have understood the passage, which speaks clearly of the *roga* of the themes (τὰ θέματα ῥογεύεσθαι) and not of the one of the *strategoi*. Moreover, it is hardly possible to imagine *strategoi* who received a salary every fourth year, since we know that they were appointed for a limited time (usually three years or less). On the other hand, we find, also in the Book of Ceremonies, the list of the yearly salaries paid to the *strategoi* and the *kleisourarchai* at the time of Leo VI (between 908 and 911).[5] The amounts of this list (between 2880 and 360 nomismata, depending on the importance of the province) are much smaller than the ones mentioned above as being the salaries of whole themes; it thus becomes clear that these relatively small amounts represent the yearly remuneration of the *strategoi* themselves, maybe together with their retinues, but have nothing to do with the soldiers' pay. For these reasons I think that one should make a clear distinction between the yearly *roga* of the *strategoi* and their relatively few full-time mercenary subordinates on one hand,[6] and the *roga* of the numerous farmer-soldiers on the other, which could conveivably be paid to them at irregular intervals, as their basic subsistence came from the land that they cultivated.

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[3] Constantini Porphyrogeniti, *De Cerimoniis aulae byzantinae*, ed. I. I. Reiske (Bonn 1829) I, 493-494.

[4] P. A. Yannopoulos, "Une liste des thèmes dans le 'Livre des Cérémonies' de Constantin Porphyrogénète," *Byzantina* 12 (1983) 233-246.

The document describing the four-year cycle of payment for the themes has been dated by several scholars between 863 and 911. This date is based on its contents: the four-year cycle applies to the so-called "Oriental" themes, that is the non-naval military provinces that developed in the territory of the late Roman *praefectura praetorio per Orientem*, the *strategoi* of which were also receiving a yearly salary (while the *strategoi* of the West were remunerated by collecting *sportulae*); among these themes one finds Charsianon (which was still a *kleisoura* in 863) but does not find the theme of Sebasteia (certainly created before 911).[7]

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[5] *De Cerimoniis*, 696-697.

[6] The existence of full-time mercenaries at the service of the provincial *strategoi* is shown, among other things, by the titles borne by some of their subordinates. Cf. N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles* (Paris 1972) 341 *(domestikos, kentarchos, komes tes hetaireias).*

[7] *Ibid.*, 347, cf. 341-342 (on the meaning of Oriental themes); Yannopoulos, *loc. cit.* goes even further; first he supposes that the four-year cycle was abolished before 908-911, date of the list of salaries of the *strategoi* and because of that list — but we have seen that a distinction should be made between the salary of the *strategoi* and that of the themes; and then he speculates that the abolition of the four-year cycle should be attributed to Michael III (+ 867), on the grounds that, if the reform was due to an emperor of the Macedonian dynasty, Constantine VII would not have omitted to say so; all this is very weak, uncertain, and not useful.

Further information concerning the periodicity of payment of the thematic armies is contained in the Arab geography of Ibn Khurdadbih, and possibly derives from the mid-ninth century report of al-Jarmi:[8] "La paye du soldat . . . n'a lieu que tous les trois ans. Il arrive même qu'on paye, en une fois, la somme représentant quatre, cinq ou six années de service."[9] Here again we are informed of soldiers' salaries that are paid in distant intervals — and possibly irregular ones.

In order to understand the significance of the four-year cycle, one has to understand, first of all, the reason for which this text has been introduced in the Book of Ceremonies. Is it an excerpt mentioned in order to inform the reader about a financial peculiarity of the past, or does it serve a different purpose? All scholars have accepted the financial interpretation which certainly comes to mind at first reading, especially if the passage is taken out of its context. In his strenuous effort to compute the Byzantine army payroll in the ninth century, W. Treadgold writes that "the emperors . . . tried to equalize their expenditure on an annual basis."[10] This is a rational explanation of the *De Cerimoniis* text that would have reflected progress, from the accounting point of view, if compared to the irregular pay described by Ibn Khurdadbih. But is the financial interpretation the only valid one?

The paragraph we are dealing with is part of the minor treatise "on imperial campaigns" (περὶ βασιλικῶν ταξειδίων), which is found in the first folios of the Leipzig manuscript and is published as an appendix to the first book of the *De Cerimoniis* in the Bonn edition.[11] At the beginning we find the list of the permanent camps of Asia Minor (ἄπληκτα), then a detailed description of the preparations that used to be made when an emperor participated personally in a campaign. Then starts a new text[12] that Constantine VII wrote for his own son Romanos, on the basis of a systematic treatise that the *magistros* Leon Katakylas had composed under the reign of Leo VI

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[8] Al Jarmi has been in the center of a recent animated discussion: F. Winkelmann, "Probleme der Informationen des al-Ǧarmi über die byzantinischen Provinzen," *Byzantinoslavica* 43 (1982) 18-29; W. Treadgold, "Remarks on Al Jarmi," *Byzantinoslavica* 44 (1983) 205-212.

[9] M. J. de Goeje, *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum* 6 (Leyden 1889) 84.

[10] W. Treadgold, *The Byzantine State Finances in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries* (New York 1982) 14 ff.

[11] *De Cerimoniis*, 444 ff.

[12] *De Cerimoniis*, 455 ff.

(886-912), describing what used to be done in the times of previous emperors (Theophilos, Michael III and Basil I, that is between 829 and 886) following a tradition that went back to the Isaurian dynasty (717-797): ceremonies, collection of pack animals, the emperor's baggage train, reserve equipment, preparation of the imperial convoy, security, order of marching in Byzantine territory and in enemy territory. There follows a long postscript which is particularly interesting for us because it contains the excerpt that we are studying.[13] Constantine VII, still addressing his son, tells him that it is now time for him to learn what was done before the campaigns (τὰ πρὸ τῶν ταξειδίων γινόμενα):

1. The system of optical telegraph devised to inform the emperor of a possible Arab raid, which would have been purportedly abolished by Michael III.

2. The paragraph that we are studying concerning the *roga* of the themes that was paid every four years in the past.

3. A list of checks that had to be conducted by each *strategos*: he should make sure that each *bandon* of his theme has its own smith (κομοδρόμον) and shoemaker (τζαγγάριον); that each *bandon* carries three water skins (that would enable the soldiers to cross deep or difficult rivers), together with several other tools.

It is clear that the three above texts are put together because they show three successive stages of preparing a campaign: information that the enemy is attacking, *roga* of the thematic armies, precautions to be taken by the *strategos* so that his army will not miss anything essential while on the move. In other words, the verb ῥογεύεσθαι is used here in order to indicate the mobilization of the thematic armies — a mobilization that most probably coincided with the distribution of the *roga* to the soldiers. Do we not know that the word ἀδνούμιον, which initially meant the payment of the salary, ended up by meaning the troop review?

By introducing in this part of his book the paragraph that we are studying, Constantine VII wanted to inform his son about the past habit of mobilizing and paying the thematic armies once every four years. The preserved historical sources seldom mention the names of the themes involved in military conflicts and consequently it is impossible to check the accuracy of this information. Of course, we know of cases of major operations in which all "Oriental" themes participated — such as the battle of Poson in 863.[14] But these were situations of exceptional importance and of a defensive character. Were *all* the themes ever mobilized for an attack into enemy territory?

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[13] *De Cerimoniis*, 492-494.

It is clear to my mind that a text declaring that three themes were mobilized and paid salaries every year, describes the units that in normal times constituted part of the standing army for the campaigning season of this year — the themes that, together with the *tagmata*, were at the emperor's disposal for quick defensive intervention or for a campaign abroad. The Life of St. Philaretos describes how, in the late eighth century, an offensive campaign against the Arabs was preceded by an *adnoumion* of the provincial cavalry;[15] an *adnoumion* is also mentioned just before the campaign in the military handbook of Leo VI,[16] while other sources mention clearly the distribution of the *roga* to the themes before marching against the enemy.[17] The most eloquent texts in this respect, also preserved in the Book of Ceremonies, are the accounts of the campaigns against Crete in 911 and 949.[18]

In both campaigns the participants received a salary (ῥόγα) before sailing to Crete. The mercenaries received higher salaries and were supposed to be paid with some frequency. In the case of the navy Mardaïtai it is clearly said that they received one gold coin per month.[19] In the case of the *scholarioi*, we find the remark that they were expected to own their complete equipment "provided that they have received all their *roga*"; if not, the state would provide them with what they were missing:[20] this clause shows clearly that the payment of the mercenaries' *roga* could have been delayed — consequently that it was normally paid with some frequency. No such provisions are mentioned concerning the soldiers of the themes — I suppose because they were not expected to receive any *roga* prior to their mobilization for the campaign.

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[14] *Theophanes Continuatus*, Bonn ed., 181. Cf. for 778, Theophanes I, 451.

[15] M.-H. Fourmy and M. Leroy, "La Vie de Saint Philarète," *Byzantion* 9 (1934) 125-127.

[16] Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 107, 725A.

[17] *Theophanes Continuatus*, Bonn ed., 475.

[18] *De Cerimoniis*, 651-669.

[19] *De Cerimoniis*, 668.

[20] *De Cerimoniis*, 658.

Things are even clearer in the case of the theme of Thrakesion in 949:[21] most of its soldiers have been obliged to pay 4 *nomismata* to the State in order to avoid being mobilized themselves; the money that was thus collected was used to pay the salaries of the soldiers of the theme of Charpezikion, who actually participated in the campaign. This is a procedure already mentioned in the Tactics of Leo VI; we know that it was also applied in the theme of Peloponnese in 921.[22] What is important for our purposes, though, is that there was no permanent provision for the *roga* of the Charpezikion — consequently this *roga* was paid only when the need arose because of the theme's participation in the campaign.

There is a further interesting detail: only a small number of the Thrakesion military participated in the campaign — mainly officers or non-commissioned officers or mercenary soldiers, a total of 150 men. Others remained at home in order to protect the province. None of them received any salary. And the account states clearly that the Thrakesion sailed to Crete "without any salary" (ἀρόγευτον). Here again, the payment of the *roga* is related to the participation in a campaign away from one's own province. No salaries are paid to the soldiers left at home, even if they were expected to protect the Byzantine territory from possible attack. No mention is made of the 150 full-time mercenaries, because the payment of their salaries did not depend on their participation in the campaign.

A general image emerges from the above:

1. The theme soldiers certainly received a salary when they left home, being mobilized outside their province.

2. They were most probably not paid for defending their own province.

3. "In the past," says Constantine VII referring to an unspecified time in the period 863-911, the army of each theme was usually mobilized (and paid a salary) once every four years. We assume that in these years it was part of the standing army.

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[21] *De Cerimoniis,* 666, 669.

[22] Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 107, 1069 A-B; Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio,* ed. G. Moravcsik and R. J. H. Jenkins (Washington, D.C. 1967), chs. 51 and 52. Cf. also my remarks in *Actes de Dionysiou* (Paris 1968), no. 1, p. 39.

4. Later this formula was changed, but we do not know if there were any regular call-ups; Ibn Khurdadbih also alludes to irregular mobilizations of the themes, but his information might refer to a period earlier than the one of Constantine VII.

5. In the tenth century, when the soldiers of a theme had to be mobilized, they sometimes had the choice between going themselves to campaign (and receiving a salary) or paying (in order to buy off their participation in the campaign) and staying home.[23]

These were obviously farmer soldiers, who lived at home for most of the time and were obliged to maintain their military equipment and be ready for an eventual call-up. Most of the years, they worked their fields; if an enemy attacked, they defended their properties without being paid. This was sheer self-defence. But when there was a call-up, they had to abandon their holding to the other members of their families and participate in the campaign, often without receiving any rations from the State, their maintenance being part of their own responsibility.[24] But they received a salary, a *roga*, which thus appears as a compensation for missing at least part of a working season on their fields as well as a payment intended to boost their morale and attract them to the armed service, the basic costs of which were covered by the revenues of their partly tax-exempt holding.

The above image invites us to turn now to a clause contained in Constantine VII's *novella* concerning the "normal" value of military holdings.[25] A value of four pounds of gold was deemed fit for the *strateiai* of horsemen as well as for those of sailors of the naval themes of Aigaion Pelagos, of Samos and of the Kibyrraiotai, whose service was very heavy because they had to personally provide for their equipment as fighters and as oarsmen (αὐτόστολοι καὶ αὐτερέται). This kind of service is opposed to that of "those who serve in the imperial *ploïmon* for a salary (ἐπὶ ῥόγαις) as well as the other sailors, (who) must possess immovable property of two pounds, according to the prevailing custom; and this seems enough (to the emperor)." The sailors mentioned here were certainly not the full-time mercenaries who constituted the nucleus of the imperial *ploïmon*, a corps very similar to the *tagmata* of the capital. They look more like auxiliaries who were called up to complete the crews of the imperial *ploïmon* only for a part of the year, undoubtedly the summer, when the necessity for such a call-up arose. When they served the navy, they also received a salary, *roga*, which was tabulated with the general expenses of the expedition in which they participated.[26] But as they served in the imperial fleet, they received all their military equipment from the State: this is shown from the chapter of the Book of Ceremonies describing in detail what weaponry was necessary to equip a warship *(dromon)* — obviously because this weaponry was provided by the State to the crew and was not the sailors' personal property.[27] In other words, these sailors were not αὐτόστολοι καὶ αὐτερέται like the ones of the maritime themes and, consequently, they did not need to have as extensive a holding as the theme horsemen or the naval theme sailors. Seen from a different angle, the above conclusion would mean that, in the eyes of the authorities, the partly tax-exempt revenue of a military holding was approximately destined half for the soldier's maintenance and half for the purchase and maintenance of his military equipment.[28]

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[23] This formula could better explain a passage of the Life of St. Euthymios the Younger, where it is said that Euthymios' mother, the widow of a soldier, decided to enroll her son in the army because she was "pressed by the campaign": καταγχομένη τῇ τῆς ἐκστρατείας ἐπιθέσει. Lemerle, *Agrarian History*, 145, proposes to correct ἐκστρατείας (campaign) to στρατείας (military obligation) and this seems reasonable. But the word ἐκστρατεία may as well be kept, if one thinks that the payment of the *strateia* was required only in case of a campaign. Euthymios, being too young, was not then mobilized and it seems that he managed to avoid active military service for several years. The Life of St. Euthymios is published by L. Petit, "Vie et office de Saint Euthyme le Jeune," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 8 (1903) 155-205, 503-536 and has been reprinted in *Bibliothèque hagiographique orientale* 5 (Paris 1904).

[24] The Lives of St. Nikon Metanoeite and St. Luke the Stylite attest clearly the cases of soldiers who did not receive rations from the State but received from home all that was necessary for their maintenance: cf. Lemerle, *Agrarian History*, 146-149; Haldon, *Recruitment*, 45.

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[25] I. and P. Zepos, *Jus Graecoromanum* I, 223. Cf. Lemerle, *Agrarian History*, 117ff.

[26] The existence of such reservists can be deduced from studying the expenses of the campaigns against Crete. In 911, for example, we learn that the imperial *ploïmon* was 12000 strong (*De Cerimoniis*, 651) but later, in the same document, we realize that its total strength was 23002 men, out of whom only 12502 were actually paid a salary for the campaign (*De Cerimoniis*, 652, 654). I understand these 12502 to be the reservists, called up for the campaign and receiving a salary for that purpose, while the remaining 10500 were the regular mercenaries of the imperial navy, whose salaries were already paid independently from their participation in the campaign.

[27] *De Cerimoniis*, 669-671. One should note that this equipment is, among other things, made up of personal weapons (helmets, cuirasses, lances, swords, etc.), which were obviously used to equip the unarmed crew members.

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Thus, the regular thematic soldiers owned their armament and other equipment.[29] And this type of soldier is well attested already in the eighth century, in texts that only recently have received the attention that they deserve.

The basic text is paragraph 16, 2 of the Isaurian *Ecloga*,[30] the information of which is partly confirmed by a judicial decision attributable to Leo III or Constantine V.[31] The first text has been successfully interpreted;[32] the second has been brought into the discussion recently.[33]

The *Ecloga* paragraph, contained in a chapter concerning the *peculium castrense*, examines what happens when two (or more) brothers inherit the paternal estate (or household: *oikos*[34]) and one of them joins the army (στρατευθῇ), while living in it together with his sibling. Difficulties can be avoided if the brothers make an agreement which the law explicitly recognises. But what if there is no such agreement and after some time the brothers want to divide their properties? According to the Roman legal tradition, the inheritance is divided in equal parts among brothers. But in the case under consideration we have one of them, who lived on the estate but worked less on it, and who had some extra revenues (above all, his salary, ῥόγα) and some extra expenses (above all, his military equipment). What would be a fair sharing formula?

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[28] This distinction between the soldiers' holdings is repeated — with different tariffs — in *De Cerimoniis,* 695: the horsemen should have a property of five pounds, while the *"stratiotes"* of the imperial *ploïmon* (the word *stratiotes* here cannot but indicate the holder of a *strateia,* i.e., a reservist serving in the imperial *ploïmon*) should have only three pounds worth of real estate.

[29] Other tenth and eleventh-century texts proving the above statement are discussed by Haldon, *Recruitment,* 47, 57-58.

[30] *Ecloga. Das Gesetzbuch Leons III und Konstantinos V.,* ed. L. Burgmann (Frankfurt 1983) [Forschungen zur byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte, 10] 10-12 (our text is to be found on pages 220-222). A first, unsuccessful, attempt at commenting upon this text was made by J. Mossay and P. Yannopoulos, "L'article XVI, 2 de l'Éclogue des Isauriens et la situation des soldats," *Byzantion* 46/1 (1976) 48-57.

[31] D. Simon, "Byzantinische Hausgemeinschaftsverträge," *Beiträge zur europäischen Rechtsgeschichte und zum geltenden Zivilrecht. Festgabe für J. Sontis* (München 1977) 94.

[32] Haldon, *Recruitment,* 67 ff.

[33] R.-J. Lilie, "Die zweihundertjährige Reform," *Byzantinoslavica* 45 (1984) 196-197. Lilie repeats Haldon's interpretation but seems to express reservations about it.

[34] In this context, the term *oikos,* indicating a unit producing revenue thanks to the toil (καμάτων) of those holding it, cannot be a house. Haldon translates dutifully as "household" but I am tempted to go a little bit further and translate by "estate," keeping in mind the meaning of the term *oikos* in Byzantine Egypt (cf. J. Gascou, "Les grands domaines, la cité et l'état en Egypte byzantine," *Travaux et Mémoires* 9, 1985, 1-90) and in tenth and eleventh-century documents, in which it is often related to the military: στρατιωτικὸς οἶκος (cf. Lemerle, *Agrarian History,* s.v. *oikos*;

In a postscript (16, 2, 2), the legislator explains clearly what are the objects that the soldier will keep for himself independently of the way in which the rest of the property will be divided: he keeps whatever he may have received as booty or as a gratuity *(philotimia)* from his superiors, provided that he still has in his possession the object itself — that is, he cannot claim any compensation for objects that fall in the above categories and which have in the meantime disappeared, having been destroyed or used up. These items can be considered as "honorific" revenues of the soldier, obtained because he distinguished himself at war; consequently, they are reserved for him only, apart from the rest of the family properties that he will share with his brothers.

For the rest of the properties, three possibilities are taken into consideration, depending upon the length of time during which the soldier has lived together with his brother(s) on the family estate:

(a) Up to ten years: all properties are shared equally; as it will appear from the following paragraph, this obviously includes the soldier's equipment, which presumably will have to be evaluated and counted in the soldier's share, thus diminishing his part of the rest of the property.

(b) Between ten and thirteen years: the soldier, who is expected in the meantime to have acquired not only his basic weaponry, but also a cuirass, has the right to keep for himself his typically military equipment (battle-horse and harness, weapons, cuirass), but nothing beyond it. This means that all the rest of his equipment, even if used

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and *Actes d'Iviron*, ed. J. Lefort, N. Oikonomidès, D. Papachryssanthou I [Paris 1985] 112).

for military purposes, will be considered as part of the family property to be divided in equal shares among the brothers.

(c) After the thirteenth year: the soldier is entitled to keep for himself his basic equipment, plus whatever objects he may have acquired (with salaries received after the thirteenth year) and which still exist at the time of the sharing of property (here again he cannot claim compensation for objects that have disappeared in the meantime).

Presumably the legislator introduced this case in a code of law, because it represented a rather common situation in his time. The soldier described here belongs to the light cavalry — he is the average Byzantine soldier of the period, similar to the one described in the Life of St. Philaretos in the late eighth century. His military equipment has not been given to him by the State; it is considered to have been acquired with the common revenues of the *oikos*, and for this reason, during the first ten years, it is part of the family property to share. But the soldier also receives a salary; its amount is not known to us, nor is the frequency with which it was paid, although the figures mentioned allow us to suspect a three-year cycle of payment, the same as in Ibn Khurdadbih.[35] Be that as it may, it is clear that, according to the legislator, ten years of this salary (or, rather, four years of paid service within a ten year period), with the important advantages that it provided to a peasant household chronically short of cash, would constitute a compensation high enough to make up for the military equipment, which from then on becomes the separate property of the soldier. After the thirteenth year, the soldier is further authorized to keep for himself all savings that he can make on his salary (and definitely not the consumption goods that he may have acquired and used up over the years).

It is true that the expression "military land" does not appear anywhere in this text; it is also true that nowhere is there any hint that the estates concerned had any particular status because one brother joined the military — but we know that the military lands obtained a special status only in the tenth century and that, until then, they were part of the average small land holdings that existed all over the empire. But, as Haldon has stressed, the actual situation described in the *Ecloga* text is very close to the one that modern historians usually attribute to a military holding.

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[35] During the ten first years, one expects four payments of *roga*, on year one of the enrolment, plus three subsequent *rogai* (at the latest on the fourth, seventh and tenth years, according to the three-year cycle). One more salary would certainly be paid before the thirteenth year, which is the next milestone mentioned by the legislator. But of course, all this is a simple indication and cannot be considered as secure.

1. The soldier is living with his brother(s) on the family estate and draws revenues for his subsistence and for acquiring his military equipment. The sheer fact that this expensive equipment was the personal property of the soldier — consequently transmittable by way of inheritance — may have been a major reason for military service in the provinces becoming hereditary.

2. Although this is not clearly said, the soldier participates in the agricultural activities, at least on a part-time basis. The expression ἀπὸ καμάτων τοῦ κοινοῦ αὐτῶν οἴκου, i.e., of the soldier and of his brother, hints at work done in common by the two brothers, especially when read in conjunction with the phrase that follows and which attributes all initiatives of the farming enterprise (presumably such things as planting vines, building mills, etc.) to the brother who works full time in it (καὶ σπουδῆς τοῦ ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ μείναντος ἀδελφοῦ).[36]

3. Beyond his personal work (interrupted by his military duties), the soldier contributes his salary to the household economy. Nothing is said of food rations that he would bring in — undoubtedly because his subsistence was assured from the revenues of the estate.

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[36] Mossay-Yannopoulos 52, quote *Ecloga* 12, 6 in order to say that any lucrative activities were forbidden to soldiers, implying thus that agricultural activities were also forbidden. This is not the case: *Ecloga* 12, 6 forbids soldiers undertaking such activities on behalf of others (long term renting; or becoming the supervisor of someone else's estates). The prohibition of agricultural activities to soldiers clearly exists in the Justinianic legislation (*C.J.* XII, 35, 15), which has been repeated in the Byzantine Mutiny Act that some authors date to the seventh-ninth centuries (cf. Lemerle, *Agrarian History*, 60-61). But this date is by no means secure; and even if it were accepted, one could always explain the reproduction of this clause by the fact that the legislator had in mind the professional mercenaries of the Constantinopolitan army. Similar reservations as to the soldiers' agricultural activities have been expressed by Lilie, *loc. cit.*, on the fragile grounds that the soldier had to be occupied full time by his military service all summers and, consequently, would not have the time to work on the land.

4. Nothing is said about the fiscal status of the estate: was it exempt from secondary taxes and corvées as the military lands are known to have been in the tenth century? The point is beyond the legislator's scope and is not raised at all. Yet this hypothesis is not unrealistic.

This image is confirmed in its general lines by the decision of Leo III and Constantine V, mentioned supra (note 31). We have the case of a young man (a minor? this has been supposed but is not certain), who enters an *oikos* as a γαμβρός (i.e., as husband — or future husband — of one daughter of the household) and who is a soldier. He contributes to the household economy his salary and his personal work: περὶ γαμβρῶν στρατιωτῶν εἰσερχομένων εἰς οἴκους εἰσφερόντων ῥόγας αὐτῶν καὶ καμάτους ποιούντων. Now, if the marriage arrangement falls through, the soldier would be entitled to take back all gratuity and booty (ἀπὸ βασιλικῶν δωρημάτων καὶ ἐκ τοῦ σπαθίου αὐτοῦ) as well as salary (ῥόγα) while his former father-in-law would have the right to claim whatever outlay he made for him: for his armament (στρατιωτικὴν ἐξόπλισιν), for his expenses (δαπάνην) and for his clothing (φορεσίαν) i.e., all sizeable investments (one has to stress, though, that this text does not necessarily imply that *all* armament and clothing were paid for by the father-in-law; the soldier might well have had some weapons when he entered the *oikos* and then have acquired some more with the financial help of his father-in-law; armament was bought piecemeal, as is also said in *Ecloga* 16, 2, and of course, suffered wear and tear and had to be replaced). Here again we have an *oikos*. As the "soldier" was working on the land (that belonged to his father-in-law) and maybe brought fiscal advantages to it, he is not requested to reimburse anything for his maintenance, and he is entitled to take back the cash that he brought in. On the other hand, the *oikos* had to invest in his equipment and clothing, as has been seen above. The main difference between this text and *Ecloga* 16, 2 is that in this text the soldier has no rights of property on the *oikos*, while in *Ecloga* 16, 2 he is a co-owner from inheritance.

What we learn from both the above eighth-century texts is very similar to what is said in the Tactics of Leo VI: the soldier should be able to attend to his military duties (στρατεία), when there is an expedition or call-up, and have others who would cultivate (γεωργοῦντας) his estates (ἐν τοῖς ἰδίοις οἴκοις) and would supply what is necessary for equipping and arming the soldier, while the estates would remain free from all other fiscal obligations (δημοσίου δουλειῶν).[37] No scholar has ever doubted that this text of Leo refers to real military holdings.

If the soldier-farmer, who received a salary at least when mobilized,[38] is mentioned in a code of law of the first half of the eighth century, we have to assume that the institution was by then common — consequently that it was created quite some time earlier. How much earlier, is open to speculation. But this does bring us very close to Heraclius and his successors, who have been considered as the initiators of the theme system by several modern authorities and by Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos himself.

A last but basic question on this subject is to establish when the military service of a soldier-farmer was seen as a fiscal obligation (that could be replaced by payments in cash) for him and for his successors, even if these were physically unable to perform their actual military duties. It seems obvious to me that this conception of military service would have been possible only if the obligation was attached to the soldier's property that passed to his successors. The well-known case described in the Life of St. Euthymios the Younger (first half of the ninth century) is very clear: the widow of a soldier enrolls her young son in the army in order to avoid heavy payments.[39] But we can now say that this situation was common well before that time. In a letter that he addressed to Empress Irene glorifying her for the tax alleviations that she granted in March 801, Theodore Studites writes, among other things: Αἱ στρατιώτιδες τὸ οἰκεῖον πένθος ἔχουσαι τῆς ἀνδρικῆς ἀποβολῆς, οὐκ ἐπιθρηνήσουσιν τὴν ὑπὲρ τοῦ θανέντος ἐλεεινὴν καὶ ἀπάνθρωπον ἐξαπαίτησιν: the wives of soldiers, having their own sorrow from the loss of their husbands, will not have to lament in addition for the pitiful and inhuman exaction (imposed upon them) because of the deceased (husband).[40] Until 801 the widow had to pay for the service that she was unable to provide herself. This obligation was temporarily abolished by Irene and probably reinstated by her successor Nikephoros I, as we find it in the Life of St. Euthymios.

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[37] A similar image is given by the treatise *De Velitatione Bellica*, in which a clear distinction is made between the active soldiers and the *"stratiotai"* (holders of military lands) who serve them. See the remarks of Haldon, *Recruitment*, 60, note 104 and the text in G. Dennis, *Three Byzantine Military Treatises* (Washington, D.C. 1985) 216.

[38] By now, it must be clear that the soldier-farmers received a *roga*; consequently, the payment of such salaries to the army by Heraclius does not by any means prove that this army was recruited without taking into consideration the soldiers' landed properties. This point of view has been expressed by W. Kaegi, "Late Roman Continuity in the Financing of Heraclius' Army," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 32/2 (1982) 53-61 and again in the first part of his "Two Studies in the Continuity of Late Roman and Byzantine Military Institutions," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 8 (1982) 87-113. See also the remarks of Averil Cameron and Judith Herrin, *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century: the Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai* (Leiden 1984) 229-230.

[39] See supra, footnote 23.

This text shows beyond any doubt that this was a practice quite common by the end of the eighth century. Of course, it does not state how old this practice was. Theodore declares that Irene abolished several unjust exactions that her predecessors had omitted (λαθοῦσα) to correct, "although some of them had reigned in an orthodox fashion" (καίπερ τινὰς εὐσεβῶς βεβασιλευκότας).[41] No Isaurian emperor could ever be called an "orthodox" by Theodore Studites. Consequently, the taxes and obligations revoked by Irene, or at least some of them, were introduced before 717. Although it is impossible to assert that this was true for *all* the taxes and obligations enumerated in this letter, it is possible to hypothesize that such practices concerning the soldier-farmers may well have existed from the time that the institution made its appearance. After all, Byzantium had always applied the Roman legislation and recognized the right to private property. When someone was enrolled in the army on the basis of real estate, which for this reason benefitted from tax alleviations, his successors who would inherit his privileged properties would normally also inherit his obligations toward the State. This was certainly the case in the second half of the eighth century, and probably much earlier.

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[40] Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 99, 932 D.

[41] *Ibid.*, 932 B.

XI

TERRES DU FISC ET REVENU DE LA TERRE AUX X^{e}-XI^{e} SIÈCLES

L'État, le plus grand propriétaire foncier à Byzance, possédait des domaines de statuts variés : les biens de la couronne (*épiskepseis, kouratoreiai*), exploités pour le compte de l'empereur ; les biens des organisations étatiques (tels les centres d'élevage de l'armée) ; les dotations foncières exploitées directement par des organismes de bienfaisance étatiques (tel l'*orphanotropheion*) ou para-étatiques (tels les *euageis oikoi*), qui attiraient des donations supplémentaires de la part de particuliers désireux de sauver leur âme. Même l'impersonnel fisc devenait propriétaire de toute terre abandonnée et déclarée klasmatique. Jusqu'au X^{e} siècle, le fisc avait tendance à ne pas garder ces terres pour lui-même et à ne pas les exploiter comme propriétaire ; au contraire, il tentait soit de les céder aux voisins qui s'engageaient à payer totalement l'impôt qui les grevait, soit de les vendre, tout en les frappant d'une imposition très légère ; dans les régions dépeuplées, on les vendait et on les imposait à des taux extrêmement bas, que l'on prévoyait de réviser (en fait, de doubler) une quinzaine d'années plus tard[1]. Mais cette attitude changea progressivement, dès le règne de Basile II, et s'affirma pendant le XI^{e} siècle ; le fisc se mit à garder les terres qu'il acquérait d'une façon ou d'une autre et tâcha de les exploiter directement. Le nombre des parèques de l'État augmenta et le processus d'asservissement des campagnes s'accentua. L'État utilisa ces propriétés plus tard, sous les Comnènes, pour financer le nouveau système de la *pronoia*.

Ce changement de politique a pu être motivé par toutes sortes de raisons. Il est vraisemblable que l'une d'elles a été l'augmentation des revenus qu'un propriétaire pouvait tirer de la terre — augmentation qui rendait plus attrayante l'exploitation directe —, même s'agissant du fisc, qui, comme propriétaire, devait faire face à d'importants problèmes de gestion. Un autre facteur pourrait être

[1] N. OIKONOMIDES, Das Verfalland im 10.-11. Jahrhundert: Verkauf und Besteuerung, *Fontes Minores*, 7, Francfort, 1986, p. 161-168.

Abréviations : DÖLGER, *Finanzverwaltung* : F. DÖLGER, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der byzantinischen Finanzverwaltung besonders des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, 1927 ; réimp. Hildesheim, 1960. KAŽDAN, *Derevnja* : A. P. KAŽDAN, *Derevnja i gorod v Vizantii*, Moscou, 1960. LEMERLE, *Cinq études* : P. LEMERLE, *Cinq études sur le XI^{e} siècle byzantin*, Paris, 1977. SCHILBACH, *Metrologie* : E. SCHILBACH, *Byzantinische Metrologie*, Munich, 1970. SCHILBACH, *Quellen* : ID., *Byzantinische metrologische Quellen*, Thessalonique, 1982.

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une augmentation de la population, grâce à laquelle il aurait été plus facile de trouver des locataires pour les terres de l'État, alors qu'auparavant, en situation de pénurie de main-d'œuvre, on aurait été forcé de continuer à appliquer, avec des nuances, les pratiques protobyzantines de l'*épibolè* (l'*adjectio sterilium*) et de céder ces terres coûte que coûte, dans l'espoir que celui qui recevait la terre s'efforcerait de la mettre en valeur et s'acquitterait de l'impôt. Ce sont ces hypothèses que nous tenterons de tester dans ce qui suit. Il s'agit de savoir si le rendement des terres s'est amélioré de façon sensible à l'époque qui nous occupe, ou si le changement de politique doit être plutôt rapporté à une disponibilité accrue de main-d'œuvre.

Le principal problème est le manque d'informations adéquates : nous avons pour cette époque des sources narratives, qui parlent peu de l'agriculture ; des sources normatives, lois ou traités fiscaux, qui fournissent le gros de nos renseignements, mais qui établissent des règles générales, sans envisager leur application à la réalité concrète — aux réalités concrètes, vaudrait-il mieux dire ; et nous avons très peu — pratiquement pas — de documents d'archives, qui nous permettraient de saisir ces réalités. De plus, les documents, extrêmement rares pour le Xᵉ siècle, rares aussi pour le XIᵉ, proviennent uniquement d'archives monastiques — et sont donc relatifs à des domaines privilégiés. Leur témoignage a de fortes chances de concerner des cas exceptionnels et non pas la situation qui prévalait pour le commun des mortels.

C'est là une insuffisance évidente de notre étude. Une insuffisance, mais peut-être aussi une force : cette situation nous oblige à prendre une certaine distance à l'égard des détails et à étudier les grandes lignes, ces grandes lignes qui étaient sans doute seules connues des législateurs ou des comptables fiscaux des Xᵉ et XIᵉ siècles. Nous tâcherons de comparer ces données à celles fournies par les quelques actes de la pratique dont nous disposons, sans nous faire d'illusions : les prévisions de type normatif ne peuvent pas correspondre à 100% aux situations concrètes décrites dans les documents conservés, car ces situations différaient selon les lieux (par exemple, la longueur du *schoinion* a pu varier d'une région à l'autre et être affectée par la coutume locale ou par un décret impérial) ; elles pouvaient changer d'une année à l'autre et dépendre en partie du rédacteur de chacun des actes conservés : celui-ci était ou n'était pas consciencieux ou honnête. Nous connaissons des recenseurs qui ont manifestement favorisé certains contribuables[2], peut-être en échange de faveurs. Nous en connaissons d'autres qui, pour augmenter leurs propres revenus ou ceux du fisc, n'ont pas hésité à falsifier la base même de leur recensement. Théophylacte d'Achrida se plaint des géomètres qui diminuent la longueur de leur schoinion et font des calculs de façon ignorante afin de favoriser les intérêts du fisc, qui sont les leurs[3]. Un autre cas est rapporté par Michel Choniate dans son *hypomnèstikon* à Alexis III Ange. Le métropolite d'Athènes se plaint des souffrances que subissait alors son diocèse du fait des collecteurs d'impôts ; il déclare en particulier : «Nous avons subi des recensements (ἀναγραφὰς) et des contrôles de recensements (ἐπιτηρήσεις ἀναγραφῶν), qui visaient à mesurer (γεωμετρουσῶν) nos terrains sablonneux et maigres à pas de puce (ἴχνεσι ψύλλων)»[4]: il est également fait allusion, dans ce texte, au recours à une unité de longueur (le pas) plus petite que ce qu'elle aurait dû être, ce qui entraînait que la surface imposable était plus grande qu'elle ne l'était en réalité. Or ce sont ces valeurs, devenues «réalité fiscale», que nous retrouverions dans les documents, s'ils étaient conservés.

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[2] Cf. par exemple *Docheiariou* n° 2.

[3] *PG* 126, c. 452 = éd. Gautier, n° 96, p. 493.

Mais Byzance, surtout avant le milieu du XIe siècle, était un État relativement bien administré qui devait avoir un nombre élevé de fonctionnaires compétents, et les excès ou les irrégularités se faisaient sans doute dans les deux sens. On peut supposer qu'en moyenne les lois et les règlements étaient appliqués correctement: ce point ne pourra jamais être vérifié, étant donné la très faible quantité des archives byzantines qui sont conservées, ce qui exclut toute approche statistique avant le XIVe siècle — et encore. Il y a donc des chances que la réalité moyenne soit mieux exprimée par les textes normatifs et narratifs que par les documents d'archives, qui décrivent des situations concrètes mais ne permettent pas de saisir les facteurs dont on avait tenu compte pour arriver au résultat énoncé.

Ces considérations entraînent encore une remarque: dans ce qui suit, nous utiliserons les poids et mesures byzantins, sans essayer de les traduire en mesures modernes; non seulement les équivalences proposées sont toutes approximatives, mais nous sommes souvent dans l'impossibilité de dire avec certitude quelle mesure était utilisée dans chaque cas particulier (le grand ou le petit schoinion? ou une variante, peut-être de caractère local? lequel des divers *modioi*?); ce qui semble certain, c'est que dans un texte ou dans un document donné, les termes techniques utilisés devaient renvoyer à la même réalité (à moins qu'il n'y ait eu une différence dans la qualité de la terre), réalité que souvent nous ignorons, mais qui était bien connue de l'auteur et de ses contemporains.

Impôt et rente.

Il faudra tenter d'établir quel était le revenu du propriétaire «normal». Par le terme de revenu, nous entendons le loyer de la terre, ce que le propriétaire recevait lorsqu'il cédait une terre à quelqu'un qui la cultivait. Comme nous le verrons plus loin, il y avait plusieurs types de contrats qui réglaient ces locations. Dans la plupart des cas, la culture de la terre n'occasionnait aucune dépense (ou occasionnait peu de dépenses) pour le propriétaire; en revanche, l'investissement le plus important venait du cultivateur, qui était d'habitude un parèque. Celui-ci possédait ses bœufs et son équipement, et était imposé en fonction de ce qu'il possédait (je pense surtout aux impôts personnels, tels le *kapnikon* et la *synônè*, qui frappaient au XIe siècle les cultivateurs à raison d'un nomisma pour ceux qui possédaient une paire de bœufs de labour, un demi-nomisma pour ceux qui n'en possédaient qu'un, etc.). La rémunération du parèque, constituée de la part du produit de la terre qu'il gardait pour lui-même, est naturellement difficile à évaluer: elle dépendait en particulier du travail qu'il fournissait et des hasards qui déterminent le succès d'une récolte. C'est pourquoi, dans ce qui suit, nous éviterons toute tentative d'évaluer cette rémunération, bien que cette question soit importante pour l'étude de la société[5]; nous nous limiterons aux aspects purement économiques et même techniques. Autrement dit, nous tenterons d'évaluer le revenu net du propriétaire, le loyer net, qui est plus facile à saisir. C'est d'ailleurs surtout en les louant que l'État byzantin pouvait tirer un revenu de ses terres[6]. Or, une partie du loyer correspondait à l'impôt, qui était un revenu garanti pour l'État, même lorsqu'il choisissait de vendre ou de donner ses terres à des particuliers. Car l'impôt a toujours été payé à Byzance par le propriétaire d'un bien et par lui seul — au point qu'on finit par considérer comme preuve de la propriété le fait de payer l'impôt foncier d'un bien.

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[4] G. STADTMÜLLER, *Michael Choniates, Metropolit von Athen*, Rome, 1934, p. 283.

J. Gascou a noté un fait inquiétant: souvent les textes papyrologiques semblent confondre le revenu fiscal d'une terre avec le revenu du propriétaire, la rente[7]. Cette confusion pourrait exister hors de l'Égypte, comme dans la France mérovingienne; car à Byzance aussi, si les droits du fisc étaient en principe bien distingués de ceux du propriétaire, il y avait des cas où le collecteur de l'impôt était identique au collecteur de la rente — soit parce que le propriétaire des terres louées était l'État, soit parce que c'était un particulier chargé de la collecte des impôts dans la région où se trouvaient ses propres terres (forme d'autopragie). En principe, il y avait confusion entre rente et impôt lorsqu'il s'agissait des terres de l'État.

Il y avait confusion, mais pas identité. Étant donné que l'impôt sur la terre était en principe payé par son propriétaire, il est évident que la rente devait être supérieure à l'impôt, pour que les individus aient un certain intérêt à posséder et à louer des terres.

Pour plus de précisions à ce sujet nous devons nous diriger vers la première moitié du XIe siècle, où nous trouvons enfin un texte normatif qui est explicite. Il s'agit d'un petit traité métrologique, publié et commenté par E. Schilbach[8], et partiellement traduit en français et étudié par J. Lefort[9]. Compte tenu de l'importance de ce texte, nous nous attarderons un peu sur sa datation.

a) À côté de l'*orgyie* normale de 9 *spithames* de long, on y trouve mention de celle de 9 1/4 spithames, qui fut instituée par un empereur du nom de Michel pour alléger le fardeau fiscal des paysans[10]. Schilbach a montré que ce Michel est probablement Michel IV (1034-1041) et, surtout, qu'il ne peut pas être identifié à un des trois Michel qui ont régné auparavant à Constantinople[11]. *Terminus post quem*: 1034.

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[5] Les problèmes de l'économie des ménages paysans et du revenu de la terre ont été étudiés récemment par M. Kaplan, L'économie paysanne dans l'Empire byzantin du Ve au Xe siècle, *Klio*, 68, 1986, p. 198–232. Dans cet article, dont certaines conclusions diffèrent des miennes, l'auteur a insisté avec raison, me semble-t-il, sur la notion très byzantine d'autarcie (αὐτάρκεια), qui se présente comme un idéal de la vie des campagnes jusqu'à l'époque des Macédoniens.

[6] Nous connaissons des cas de terres que l'État exploitait directement, en utilisant des esclaves et des bœufs (δουλικὰ ζευγάρια) qui lui appartenaient. Ce type d'exploitation venait de disparaître dans l'*épiskepsis* d'Alôpékai, près de Milet en 1073: *Patmos* II, n° 50, l. 121-123.

[7] J. GASCOU, Les grands domaines, la cité et l'État en Égypte byzantine, *TM*, 9, 1985, p. 7–19.

[8] SCHILBACH, *Quellen*, II, 5, p. 59–60.

[9] J. LEFORT, Fiscalité médiévale et informatique: recherche sur les barèmes pour l'imposition des paysans byzantins au XIVe siècle, *RH*, 512, 1974, p. 320 s., surtout p. 320, n. 2 (traduction française).

[10] SCHILBACH, *Quellen*, II, 4, p. 54. On notera que cette modification métrologique apparaissait comme un allégement fiscal (la principale utilité de la géométrie au Moyen Âge semble avoir été de permettre d'établir l'impôt). Selon ce texte, l'empereur Michel aurait fait don aux paysans (ἀπεχαρίσατο τοῖς χωρίταις) de ce quart de spithame: de cet allongement résultait une

b) On trouve mention dans ce texte du thème maritime des Kibyrraiôtai; ce thème est encore mentionné au milieu du XIe siècle[12], mais il a par la suite décliné et il est tombé aux mains des Turcs qui déferlèrent en Asie Mineure à la suite de Mantzikert. Après la reconquête de la région par Alexis Ier Comnène, le sud-ouest de l'Asie Mineure fut constitué en un nouveau thème, dit de Mylassa et Mélanoudion, l'appellation Kibyrraiôtai disparaissant des sources[13]. *Terminus ante*: 1071.

c) Enfin, le texte indique que l'empereur «vend à raison de 7 nomismata à la livre» (πιπράσκει τῇ λίτρᾳ νομίσματα ζ')[14]. Il y a là une allusion au système des rentes sur l'État, que nous connaissons grâce à P. Lemerle[15]. En effet, le tarif selon lequel une livre d'or (doit être versée à l'État) pour (obtenir une rente annuelle de) 7 nomismata est attesté sous le règne de Léon VI; mais dans la *Peira*, qui fut rédigée vers le milieu du XIe siècle, et qui rapporte des jugements de peu antérieurs, le tarif semble avoir été modifié: 1 livre pour 6 nomismata[16]. Par conséquent, notre texte doit être placé le plus tôt possible dans la fourchette 1034-1071, peut-être sous le règne même de Michel IV. Dans la suite, nous appellerons ce texte «Tarif fiscal du XIe siècle».

Nous y apprenons que pour imposer une terre les Byzantins procédaient, dans certains cas du moins, par allivrement; on en établissait la valeur selon les taux suivants: 1 nomisma pour 1 modios de terre de première qualité, pour 2 modioi de deuxième qualité, pour 3 modioi de troisième qualité — ou selon les coutumes locales. L'impôt annuel était le vingt-quatrième de la valeur[17].

Le même rapport de 1 à 24 entre le montant de l'impôt et la valeur du bien imposé se retrouve dans le Traité fiscal de Zaborda[18]. On peut donc supposer que c'était là le tarif normal pour tout l'Empire, fondé sans doute sur une décision administrative. Naturellement, ce tarif aurait été modifiable, par une autre décision

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réduction de la superficie fiscale de leurs terres, donc une réduction de leurs impôts. Cette orgyie de 9 1/4 spithames n'était pas nécessairement utilisée dans tout l'Empire.

[11] SCHILBACH, *Metrologie*, p. 25.

[12] Un juge des Kibyrraiôtai apparaît dans deux lettres de Psellos (*MB* V, p. 297, 351); la dernière mention datable d'un stratège des Kibyrraiôtai se place sous le règne de Constantin IX Monomaque (SKYLITZÈS, éd. I. Thurn, CFHB V, Berlin - New York, 1973, p. 398, 432). Je ne connais pas de sceau des Kibyrraiôtai qui puisse être postérieur au XIe siècle.

[13] H. AHRWEILER, *Byzance et la Mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIe-XVe siècles*, Paris, 1966, p. 184, n. 5, 273.

[14] SCHILBACH, *Quellen*, p. 59, l. 32-33.

[15] P. LEMERLE, Roga et rente d'État aux Xe-XIe siècles, *REB*, 25, 1967, p. 77–100.

[16] CONSTANTIN PORPHYROGÉNÈTE, *De cerimoniis*, Bonn, p. 692–693; *Peira*, 38, 74; cf. LEMERLE, *Roga...*, p. 80—83, 89—90.

[17] SCHILBACH, *Quellen*, p. 59, l. 23-26: τῆς μὲν πρώτης ποιότητος τῆς σπειρομένης τῷ νομίσματι μόδιον α', τῆς δὲ δευτέρας τῷ νομίσματι μοδίους β', καὶ τῆς τρίτης τῷ νομίσματι μοδίους γ' ἢ κατὰ τὸ ἔθιμον τοῦ τόπου, p. 60 l. 6-7: κατασπᾶν κατὰ τρία νομίσματα λίτραν α', ἤγουν κατὰ κδ' νομίσματα εἰς τὸ α' νόμισμα τοῦ δημοσίου. — Voir également *Géométries du fisc byzantin* (Réalités byzantines 4), Paris, 1991.

[18] J. KARAYANNOPULOS, Fragmente aus dem Vademecum eines byzantinischen Finanzbeamten, *Polychronion. Festschrift F. Dölger*, Heidelberg, 1966, p. 323, l. 75: τὸ νόμισμα εἰς νομίσματα κδ'.

administrative : c'est ce qui semble être arrivé sous Alexis Ier Comnène, qui dans un chrysobulle mentionne la nouvelle «mesure» qu'il aurait mise en vigueur et que les fonctionnaires du fisc devaient appliquer[19]. Mais on a l'impression que les modifications du taux de l'impôt se faisaient souvent en modifiant les unités de longueur, comme ce fut le cas sous Michel IV (cf. *supra*).

La question se pose de savoir si le prix fiscal était proche du prix réel ou, plutôt, du prix normal. Je pense que la notion de prix «réel» doit être exclue de la discussion, car elle n'intervient que s'il y a réellement une vente, ce qui n'était pas nécessairement le cas au moment de l'établissement de l'assiette de l'impôt. Mais il y avait un prix considéré comme «normal», proche de celui pratiqué lors des transactions régulières — on exclura ici les ventes faites dans des conditions particulières, comme celles des *klasmata* ; ces ventes, connues par quelques actes du Xe siècle que j'ai essayé d'interpréter, ont été faites à des prix exceptionnellement bas[20]. Comme nous le verrons plus loin, le prix fiscal était d'habitude proche du prix normal, tout en présentant des variations reflétant la politique fiscale des empereurs.

Plus loin, l'auteur du Tarif fiscal du XIe siècle ajoute : «Mais si le bien rapporte une rente en espèces sonnantes, il faut compter 12 nomismata (de valeur) pour chaque nomisma (de rente), et non pas 24 comme pour l'impôt, car la rente comporte aussi des dépenses.»[21] Autrement dit, selon ce texte, la rente devait être le double de l'impôt, et peut-être même en réalité un peu plus, parce qu'elle devait supporter certaines dépenses, dont je comprends qu'elles sont les frais de gestion. En effet, dans le praktikon d'Adam, de 1073, qui concerne une *épiskepsis* impériale rapportant surtout des *pakta* (loyers, cf. plus loin), nous rencontrons, à la fin, la mention de ces frais d'administration, sous la forme d'une récompense due au *kouratôr*[22].

Ce passage du Tarif du XIe siècle a été interprété différemment par Schilbach qui, pour des raisons que je comprends mal, introduit ici l'opposition entre biens *autourgia* (qui produisent sans dépenses et qui, selon Schilbach, seraient soumis à l'impôt de base, 1/24e *ad valorem*) et les biens non-autourgia (qui seraient soumis au prélèvement de 1/12e)[23]. Outre le fait que le système proposé semble illogique (ce qui produit sans dépenses serait deux fois moins imposé que ce qui produit avec dépenses), il faut souligner que la notion d'autourgion n'est pas dans le texte et qu'elle a été introduite dans la discussion sans raison, pour interpréter un passage qui semblait difficile. Le problème est de savoir ce qu'il faut entendre par πρόσοδον νομισμάτων.

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[19] *Xénophon* n° 2, l. 29 : τὸ μέτρον ὃ παρὰ τῆς βασιλείας μου ἑκάστῳ νομίσματι ἐπιϐάλλειν ὡρίσθη.

[20] OIKONOMIDES, *Das Verfalland...* (cité n. 1). Des mesures de révision de la valeur «fiscale» de terres à statut spécial sont attestées sous le règne d'Alexis Ier Comnène : *Docheiariou* n° 2.

[21] SCHILBACH, *Quellen*, p. 60, l. 7-10 : εἰ δὲ ἔχει πρόσοδον τὸ τοιοῦτον κτῆμα νομισμάτων, ὀφείλεις ἀναϐιϐάζειν εἰς τὸ ἓν νόμισμα νομίσματα ιβʹ, οὐχ ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ δημοσίου νομίσματα κδʹ. Ἡ γὰρ εἴσοδος καὶ ἔξοδον ἔχει.

[22] *Patmos* II, n° 50, l. 317-319 : ἡ τοπικὴ ἔξοδος.

[23] SCHILBACH, *Metrologie*, p. 261. Le texte qui a — à tort à mon avis — inspiré cette idée est le § 38, 74 de la *Peira*, où nous lisons que «les biens à louer qui ne sont pas autourgia mais nécessitent des dépenses sont vendus à une livre (de prix) pour six nomismata (de revenu) : τὰ ἐνοίκια τὰ μὴ αὐτουργικὰ ἀλλ' ὑπὸ ἔξοδον ὄντα ἓξ νομίσματα εἰς τὴν λίτραν πιπράσκεται. Nous retrouvons ici le rapport de 1 à 12 entre le revenu annuel et la valeur d'un bien non-autourgion, ce qui est bien le cas des champs à louer. Mais rien ne dit que ce taux s'oppose à celui de l'imposition des biens autourgia, ni que les dépenses complémentaires soient considérées comme des biens imposables séparément. D'ailleurs, comme dans le cas des champs, les

Je crois que dans le Tarif fiscal du XI^{e} siècle, le terme *prosodos* (revenu) s'oppose à *dèmosion* (impôt), tant par le nom que par le taux : la rente s'oppose à l'impôt. Il est précisé qu'il s'agit d'un revenu en espèces pour bien indiquer qu'il est question de fermage et non de métayage. En effet, l'auteur du Tarif devait fournir des instructions concernant les loyers en espèces, qui étaient fixés à l'avance et engageaient la responsabilité des fonctionnaires de l'administration provinciale ; mais il n'avait pas à évoquer le métayage, le montant du prélèvement, en nature, dépendant dans ce cas de l'importance de la récolte.

Le même principe, à savoir que l'impôt foncier (δημόσιος κανών) constitue la moitié de la rente en argent (pakton) et doit être versé au fisc par le propriétaire du bien, se retrouve dans la *Loi agraire* (VI^{e}-VIII^{e} siècle)[24] et, de façon explicite, dans le Traité fiscal de la Marcienne, qui me semble dater du début du XII^{e} siècle. On y lit que les pakta du fisc sont aussi de l'impôt foncier et donnent droit à une certaine quantité de terre (*hikanôsis*) mais qu'ils ne doivent pas recevoir leur hikanôsis pour (toute) la somme qu'ils rapportent ; car ils sont perçus en pièces d'or entières, et sur ces pièces la moitié correspond à l'impôt foncier, le reste étant la *synètheia*, les autres *parakolouthèmata*, peut-être aussi du trop perçu incorporé[25]. Autrement dit, pour le fonctionnaire, le loyer des terres d'État était considéré comme un impôt parce que ce loyer allait au fisc ; mais pour procéder à l'hikanôsis, c'est-à-dire pour établir à quelle quantité de terre ce revenu donnait droit, il fallait tenir compte seulement de la moitié de ce pakton, cette moitié correspondant à l'impôt foncier, lequel était à la base de la procédure de l'hikanôsis ; naturellement, l'impôt n'était pas perçu sur les terres de l'État, sinon dans la mesure où on considérait qu'il était inclus dans le pakton[26]. Dans l'autre moitié du pakton, l'auteur du Traité fiscal, qui ne semble pas tenir compte des droits du propriétaire, reconnaît les taxes annexes que tout contribuable devait à l'État en plus de l'impôt foncier[27], qui représentent un supplément de 22%

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investissements dont il est ici question étaient à la charge du locataire et par conséquent ne pouvaient pas modifier le revenu du propriétaire. Autrement dit, le texte de la *Peira* vient confirmer l'information que nous donne le Tarif fiscal du XI^{e} siècle.

[24] *Loi agraire*, § 19, p. 104 : si un paysan abandonne ses terres mais continue à en acquitter les impôts, ceux qui exploitent les terres en son absence devront le rembourser au double — autrement dit, le double de l'impôt foncier constitue un loyer équitable, une rente normale pour la terre.

[25] DÖLGER, *Finanzverwaltung*, p. 123, l. 1-8 : Καὶ τὰ ἀπαιτούμενα πάκτα ἐν τῇ διοικήσει δημόσιος ὑπάρχει κανὼν καὶ ἱκάνωσιν ἔχουσιν καὶ ταῦτα... ἀπαιτεῖται γὰρ τὰ πάκτα ἀνὰ νόμισμα α'· τούτων δὲ τῶν νομισμάτων τὰ μὲν ἥμισυ ὑπάρχει δημόσιος κανών, τὰ δὲ ἕτερα ἥμισυ συνήθεια καὶ ἡ λοιπὴ παρακολούθησις, ἴσως δὲ καὶ ὑπεραπαίτησις σωματωθεῖσα.

[26] Ceci est montré par une simple lecture du praktikon d'Adam, de 1073 (*Patmos* II, n° 50), qui est précisément relatif à des terres d'État qui rapportent des pakta ; l'impôt foncier n'y est pas mentionné, ni les parakolouthèmata. Naturellement, on ne tient pas compte ici des taxes personnelles des paysans, qui sont indépendantes de l'impôt foncier.

[27] Ces taxes complémentaires, à savoir le *dikèraton*, l'*hexaphollon*, la *synètheia* et l'*élatikon*, étaient initialement des sportules exigées au profit des percepteurs, mais très vite détournées au profit du fisc et remplacées par d'autres sportules pour les fonctionnaires.

environ de l'impôt de base, et considère que le reste pourrait être du trop perçu que l'on aurait incorporé aux droits de l'État. Il mentionne ici les éléments constitutifs de l'*arithmion*, c'est-à-dire l'impôt «à payer» pour une terre, éléments qu'il a énumérés un peu plus haut[28], en utilisant exactement les mêmes termes que dans son analyse du pakton. Il y a cependant une différence nette entre pakton et arithmion : seule la moitié du pakton est comptée dans la procédure de l'hikanôsis, alors que de l'arithmion on retient seulement «les chiffres initiaux» (παλαιῶν διαρίων), c'est-à-dire l'impôt de base tel qu'il était avant l'addition des taxes annexes. Ainsi peut-on conclure que ce que l'auteur du Traité fiscal appelle «trop perçu», dans le cas du pakton, est le revenu net du propriétaire, qui devait tourner légèrement au-dessous de 40%, autour de 35%, du loyer brut[29]. Ces 35-40% du pakton représentent le manque à gagner qui mettait le parèque en position d'infériorité par rapport au cultivateur propriétaire. En revanche, le parèque pouvait jouir de l'aide (en cas de besoin, comme lors d'une disette) et de la protection de son seigneur, si celui-ci était vraiment puissant, éviter les corvées, les taxes extraordinaires et surtout les exactions des agents du fisc, exactions qui sont décrites comme un fléau par les auteurs des XIᵉ et XIIᵉ siècles.

Nous avons donc un rapport vraisemblablement stable, de 1 à 2, entre l'impôt foncier de base et la rente brute : c'est la situation aux XIᵉ et XIIᵉ siècles[30], lorsqu'on considère comme inévitable que l'impôt sur la terre soit payé par le propriétaire. Cette situation (sans indication chiffrée) transparaît dans le testament de Boïlas, qui précise que le revenu dont il peut disposer librement est constitué du pakton annuel de ses biens après déduction des impôts impériaux[31] — les impôts étant donc nettement inférieurs aux pakta.

Le revenu de la terre.

Conçue dans un contexte de manque de main-d'œuvre chronique, la législation de Justinien interdisait toute location à un taux inférieur aux 5/6 du loyer normal ; cette interdiction était encore appliquée au XIᵉ siècle selon la *Peira*[32]. On doit donc conclure que l'État s'efforçait de limiter la concurrence illicite entre propriétaires terriens désireux d'attirer à tout prix la main-d'œuvre disponible ; il s'y prenait de la même façon (mais inversée) avec les hommes d'affaires de Constantinople, auxquels il interdisait d'utiliser le montant du loyer comme arme contre leurs concurrents et voisins[33]. Il y a deux principaux systèmes selon lesquels le revenu de la terre pouvait être défini : le loyer en argent (pakton) et celui en nature (*dékateia* ou *mortè*).

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[28] DÖLGER, *Finanzverwaltung*, p. 122, l. 15 - p. 123, l. 1.

[29] Dans tous ces calculs, il faut toujours distinguer l'impôt personnel des parèques (*kapnikon*, *synônè*) et celui des terres dont ils étaient éventuellement propriétaires, et ce malgré le fait qu'ils devaient verser ces impôts à leurs seigneurs qui ensuite s'en acquittaient au fisc (ou les gardaient, s'ils jouissaient d'un privilège). Ainsi, le fait qu'un propriétaire (telle Kalè Pakourianè dans les actes d'Iviron) percevait les impôts de ses parèques ne signifie pas que ces impôts aient fait partie du loyer.

[30] Au XIᵉ siècle; nous rencontrons aussi des évaluations intermédiaires pour des biens qui jouissaient d'une exemption : c'est le cas au § 20,1 de la *Peira*, que j'ai essayé d'interpréter dans Ἡ Πεῖρα περὶ παροίκων, *Ἀφιέρωμα στὸν Νῖκο Σβορῶνο* I, Réthymno, 1986, p. 232–236.

[31] LEMERLE, *Cinq études*, p. 28, l. 241-243 : ἵνα ἐκπληρώνουνται ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐνιαυσιαίου πάχτου τῶν κτημάτων μου, ὑφεξαιρουμένων δῆλον ὅτι τῶν βασιλικῶν τελεσμάτων.

[32] *Nov. J.* 120 = *Bas.* V, 2, 6. Cf. *Peira* 15, 14.

Le loyer en argent.

Le *pakton* — le terme est ancien — constitue une rente fixée d'avance, et presque toujours exprimée en pièces d'or. C'est ce qu'indique le Traité fiscal de la Marcienne par la phrase ἀπαιτεῖται γὰρ τὰ πάκτα ἀνὰ νόμισμα α′ : la pièce d'or entière est l'unité de perception, chaque pièce est le loyer d'une certaine quantité de terre, quantité qui peut varier selon la qualité de la terre[34]. Mais au XIIe siècle nous rencontrons à Radolibos un pakton payé en nature[35]. Il y a également eu des solutions intermédiaires, comme celle décrite dans une scholie des *Basiliques*, qui prévoit que le loyer de la terre, fixé d'avance en pièces d'or, soit versé en partie en espèces, en partie en nature (la conversion étant faite à un taux fixé d'avance)[36]. Le loyer ressemble donc à un contrat de fermage. Les termes du contrat étant tous fixés d'avance, les risques sont supportés par le seul cultivateur[37].

À côté du pakton, il y a le *chôropakton*, qui, dans le Traité fiscal de Zaborda, est interprété comme ἡ τῶν ξένων χωραφίων ἐπὶ πάκτον ἔκληψις[38], et est expliqué comme la location par l'État de terres abandonnées. Ces terres continuent à appartenir à leurs propriétaires initiaux, mais il est prévu qu'elles passeront un jour au fisc, à moins que les propriétaires ne reviennent et ne les réclament avant l'écoulement d'un délai de trente ans. La différence entre pakton et chôropakton serait donc légale plutôt que fiscale. Le terme désignerait les locations faites par l'État de biens appartenant au *chôrion*, au village envisagé fiscalement (χωρόπακτον, cf. ἀμπέλιον / ἀμπελόπακτον, ϐιϐάριον / ϐιϐαρόπακτον, μύλος /

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[33] *Livre du Préfet*, 4, 9. Naturellement, lorsqu'il s'agit de la concurrence entre commerçants, l'interdiction est dirigée contre ceux qui offrent un loyer si élevé que leur concurrent ne peut pas payer, occupent sa boutique et l'excluent du métier. Ceci était possible parce que les métiers étaient géographiquement groupés dans certaines régions ou rues de la ville. En revanche, pour les propriétaires terriens, l'excès à limiter était l'offre de loyers trop bas par les propriétaires, pour s'attirer des locataires.

[34] DÖLGER, *Finanzverwaltung*, p. 123, l. 6, cf. *supra* n. 25. Dölger a cru nécessaire de corriger le texte, en ajoutant l'expression <μοδίους δέκα> avant νόμισμα, car il s'attendait à trouver un taux précis ; cette correction, fondée sur le taux du pakton attesté par d'autres sources, me semble inutile.

[35] *Iviron* II, Appendice II.

[36] *Bas. Schol.* XX, 1, 19, 5.

[37] Cf. *Dig.* XIX, 2, 25 = *Bas.* XX, 1, 25, § 6, repris dans HARMÉNOPOULOS, III, 8, 7.

[38] J. KARAYANNOPULOS, *Fragmente*... (cité n. 18), p. 321, l. 3. L'auteur semble comprendre (p. 324) que le chôropakton serait le pakton des *chôraphia* ; mais, s'il en était ainsi, on attendrait un terme comme **chôraphopakton*, qui n'est pas attesté autant que je sache. Au sujet du chôropakton, voir aussi F. DÖLGER, *Byzanz und die europäische Staatenwelt*, Ettal, 1953, p. 255 ; N. SVORONOS, Recherches sur le cadastre byzantin et la fiscalité aux XIe et XIIe siècles : le cadastre de Thèbes [*BCH*, 83, 1959], réimp. dans ID., *Études sur l'organisation intérieure, la société et l'économie de l'empire byzantin*, Londres, 1973, III, p. 139 ; ID., Remarques sur les structures économiques de l'empire byzantin au XIe siècle, *TM*, 6, 1970, p. 57–59.

μυλόπακτον[39]), en attendant leur transformation en terres klasmatiques, propriétés de l'État. En effet, le terme «chôropakton» se rencontre dans les actes de la pratique uniquement lorsqu'il s'agit de terres louées par l'État, de terres abandonnées, ou de περίσσειαι.

Un seul taux de pakton est attesté. Il l'est par deux documents d'archives, en 1073 (dans la région de Milet)[40] et en 1295 (en Macédoine)[41] : 1 nomisma de pakton pour 10 modioi de terre dont on peut estimer qu'elle était de première qualité. Remarquable stabilité, que l'on pourrait attribuer à une simple coïncidence, si l'on ne constatait que ce même taux est suggéré dans d'autres textes du XI^e siècle, et semble avoir été en vigueur au X^e siècle déjà. Le Tarif fiscal du XI^e siècle indique que le prix fiscal de la terre de première qualité est de 1 nomisma par modios; or ce même prix réapparaît, indirectement il est vrai, comme prix «réel» dans l'acte de 1073 qui atteste par ailleurs le taux du pakton[42]. On peut par conséquent considérer que, selon les auteurs de ces textes, le pakton annuel représenterait 1/10 de la valeur d'un bien loué. Or ce rapport est attesté dans d'autres textes, du X^e siècle:

- Dans la novelle de septembre 934 condamnant les acquisitions de terres par des puissants faites à la suite de la famine de l'année 927/28, les empereurs précisent que les terres qui ont été acquises à un prix inférieur à la moitié de leur prix normal devront être retournées sans aucune compensation; les terres qui ont été acquises à plus de la moitié de leur valeur devront être retournées avec remboursement du prix, dont on soustraira le revenu que les acquéreurs puissants en ont tiré pendant toutes ces années[43]. Autrement dit, il était concevable que le revenu de cinq à six ans représente 50% environ de la valeur d'un bien; ceci équivaudrait à un revenu annuel représentant environ 8 à 10% de la valeur du bien.

- Dans la novelle non datée de Romain II relative à la restitution des biens acquis par les puissants, on envisage le cas où le «pauvre», à qui le bien doit retourner, ne pourrait rembourser qu'une partie du prix. Dans ce cas, dit la loi, le pauvre serait tout de même déclaré propriétaire du bien, mais en laisserait l'usage au puissant pendant un temps suffisamment long pour que les revenus annuels lui remboursent son dû — ce temps ne pouvant pas excéder dix ans. Autrement dit, pour le législateur, dix ans de revenu normal de la terre étaient considérés comme suffisants pour en rembourser le prix. L'idée d'un revenu annuel représentant 10% de la valeur est donc ici implicite. Cette déclaration est suivie d'un exemple hypothétique relatif à un bien de 100 nomismata, qui serait remboursé par les revenus de dix années; si le pauvre pouvait verser 50 nomismata, la jouissance du bien serait laissée au puissant pour cinq ans seulement[44]. Le rapport de 1 à 10 entre le revenu annuel et la valeur est ici évident. Bien entendu, les données numériques sont inventées pour que l'exemple soit simple et facile à comprendre, mais le rapport indiqué reflète, je crois, la même réalité que le délai de dix ans pour le remboursement[45]. Ainsi, cette novelle suggère que la juste valeur d'une terre devait tourner autour du décuple du loyer annuel. Et la juste valeur devait être proche de la valeur fiscale, sinon identique à elle. Dans la pratique, les transactions ne pouvaient naturellement que présenter des variantes[46].

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[39] À propos de ces pakta, voir B. PANOV, Imunitetot i feudalnata renta vo Makedonija vo XI i XII vek spored pismata na Teofilakt Ohridski, *Godišen Zbornik na filozofskiot Fakultet na Univerzitetot vo Skopje*, 22, 1970, p. 258–260.

[40] *Patmos* II, n° 50.

[41] *Grègorios ho Palamas*, 2, 1918, p. 254 = *Schatzkammer*, n° 59-60.

[42] SCHILBACH, *Metrologie*, p. 252–253.

[43] ZÉPOS, *JGR* I, p. 212–213 (§ 6 et 7).

[44] *Ibidem*, p. 241–242.

Ces données coïncident assez bien avec celles du Tarif fiscal du XIe siècle, qui suppose que le revenu d'une terre louée équivaut à 1/12 de sa valeur, en ajoutant qu'il faut aussi tenir compte des frais d'administration, inévitables pour les terres gérées par le fisc, mais qui n'étaient naturellement pas comptés lorsqu'il s'agissait de particuliers, lesquels pouvaient gérer leurs terres personnellement. Compte tenu de ces données, on pourrait représenter le revenu potentiel d'une terre abandonnée (qui allait certainement devenir terre d'État) de la façon suivante, en partant de la valeur de cette terre : le pakton (rente brute) ferait 12/120 de la valeur ; il pourrait être analysé en frais d'administration : 2/120 ; en impôt foncier (qui n'était naturellement pas payé pour les terres de l'État mais qui serait perçu sur la rente du propriétaire au cas où cette terre serait vendue ou donnée à un particulier) : 5/120 ; et en rente : 5/120 (sur laquelle le propriétaire privé devrait prélever pour verser au fisc les taxes annexes, environ 22% de l'impôt foncier de base, soit un peu plus de 1/120 de la valeur). Par conséquent, la rente nette devrait être égale ou légèrement inférieure à 4/120 de la valeur du bien (3,3%).

C'est là une formule qui a dû prévaloir à Byzance du Xe au XIIIe siècle : une formule générale, qui ne s'appliquait pas nécessairement aux terres privilégiées, ni à celles acquises alors qu'elles étaient à l'abandon ; pour celles-ci, on trouve des taux particuliers, difficilement explicables. Mais cette formule semble être appliquée dans le testament de Boïlas, en 1059. Ce magnat lègue à sa fille aînée, pour 30 livres de sa dot, un domaine rapportant 80 nomismata de pakton plus un *ennomion* (soit 3,7% de la valeur, sans compter l'ennomion) ; et à sa fille cadette la moitié d'un autre domaine, qu'il compte pour 20 livres de sa dot et qui rapporte 50 nomismata par an (3,45%)[47]. Ces revenus sont nets, donc calculés après déduction des impôts fonciers (Boïlas les payait, cf. *supra* n. 31) et leur montant cadre bien avec le schéma que nous avons établi ci-dessus.

Tentons d'appliquer ce schéma au cas de la première fille de Boïlas. Valeur du bien : 30 livres, soit 2 160 nomismata ; pakton brut (1/10 de la valeur) : 216 nomismata ; il faut en soustraire les frais d'administration (2/120 de la valeur, soit 2/12 du pakton brut), restent 180 nomismata ; on soustrait aussi 1/24 de la valeur (ou 5/12 du pakton brut) comme impôt foncier, soit 90 nomismata et 13 1/3 1/24 pour les parakolouthèmata[48] ; reste une rente nette de 76 nomismata et 15/24, face aux 80 nomismata qu'annonce le document. Mais rappelons que les 80 nomismata contenaient un ennomion, dont nous ignorons l'importance.

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[45] En revanche, l'exemple fourni par le Traité fiscal de la Marcienne (DÖLGER, *Finanzverwaltung*, p. 115, l. 6-8) est certainement hypothétique (cf. καθ' ὑπόθεσιν, l. 6) et ne doit pas être mis en rapport avec le taux du pakton, auquel il fait penser.

[46] Même aujourd'hui, l'évaluation fiscale d'un bien ne coïncide pas avec le prix pratiqué lors de la vente du bien.

[47] LEMERLE, *Cinq études*, p. 60.

[48] C'est le calcul des parakolouthèmata d'après la Palaia Logarikè (ZÉPOS, *JGR* I, p. 333).

Le cas de la deuxième fille : 20 livres, soit 1 440 nomismata de valeur ; pakton brut : 144 nomismata ; moins 2/12 du pakton brut pour les frais d'administration, restent 120 nomismata ; moins 60 nomismata d'impôt de base ; moins 10 1/4 nomismata de parakolouthèmata ; il resterait un revenu net de 49 3/4 nomismata, face aux 50 nomismata de revenu net annoncés par le document.

Ces calculs sont volontairement simplistes, et approximatifs, étant donné qu'ils sont fondés sur un modèle général, que je propose, et appliqués à un cas concret. Mais le résultat me semble suffisamment proche de ce qui est indiqué dans le testament pour que l'on pense que cette façon de calculer n'était pas étrangère aux fonctionnaires byzantins.

Le loyer en nature.

Le loyer en nature était proportionnel à la récolte. Les risques étaient donc partagés entre le propriétaire et le cultivateur de la terre, au prorata des parts de la récolte qui revenaient à chacun. On connaît trois taux de loyer en nature, mais il est possible qu'il y en ait eu d'autres que nous ignorions ; de plus, il ne faut pas exclure la possibilité de variantes importantes autour des taux connus, motivées par le contexte politico-économique ou démographique que connaissait une région à un moment donné.

a) La «moitié», ἡμίσεια. Ce type de contrat est mentionné uniquement dans la *Loi agraire* et il correspond au contrat *in medietatem* des sources latines[49]. Il s'agit sans doute d'un contrat aux termes duquel propriétaire et locataire partageaient également le revenu et les dépenses, y compris l'impôt. Ce contrat n'est pas attesté dans les sources de l'époque qui nous intéresse[50].

b) La dîme, δεκατεία, δεκάτη, δέκατον. Aux termes de ce contrat, le propriétaire reçoit 1/10 de la récolte brute, sans participer aux frais de la culture[51]. La *Loi agraire*, qui en donne la définition, précise que le propriétaire de la terre reçoit 1/10 des gerbes, pour indiquer que le partage se fait sur la récolte brute, avant qu'elle subisse une élaboration quelconque, tel le battage[52]. C'est un contrat de location pour la terre arable et les pâtures ; il est bien attesté, de façon continue, jusqu'au XIVe siècle[53] et peut naturellement s'appliquer à des terres du fisc : l'opération était décrite par le verbe ἀποδεκατίζω[54], et le fonctionnaire qui gérait cette dîme était appelé *dékatistès* sous le règne d'Alexis Ier Comnène[55].

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[49] *Loi agraire,* § 12-15, 67. Cf. les remarques de KAŽDAN, *Derevnja,* p. 92–93 et de P. LEMERLE, *The Agrarian History of Byzantium from the Origins to the Twelfth Century,* Galway, 1979, p. 38 s.

[50] Ce contrat portant sur la culture des céréales doit être clairement distingué des contrats plus tardifs prévoyant le partage par moitié (ἐφημισάρικον) de la récolte d'une vigne : il est normal que la part du propriétaire d'une vigne soit plus grande, parce que dans ce cas il n'y a pas de semence. Sur ce type de locations, voir les informations concordantes contenues dans un acte italien de 953 (KAŽDAN, *Derevnja,* p. 93), dans un formulaire de contrat de location du XIV^{e} siècle (*MB* VI, p. 620–621) et dans un acte patriarcal de 1401 (MM II, p. 509). D'autres cultures intensives pouvaient également faire l'objet de loyers se situant hors de la normale : par exemple *Schatzkammer,* n° 102 ; *Dionysiou,* p. 45. En revanche, je crois qu'il faut retirer du dossier un acte de la Lembiôtissa (MM IV, p. 185) qui y a été introduit par erreur, et qui se réfère à un cas d'*épitéleia.*

[51] H.F. SCHMID, Byzantinisches Zehntwesen, *JÖBG,* 6, 1957, p. 45–110 ; A. LAIOU, *Peasant Society in the Late Byzantine Empire,* Princeton, 1977, p. 216 s. ; KAŽDAN, *Derevnja,* p. 93–94. Je crois que le dékaton qui apparaît dans quelques documents de Chalcidique au début du XV^{e} siècle est la dîme turque, *uşr* : *Docheiariou,* p. 289 et, plus en détail, N. OIKONOMIDES, Ottoman Influence on Late Byzantine Fiscal Practice, *Südost-Forschungen,* 45, 1986, p. 1–24.

[52] *Loi agraire,* § 10 : μορτίτου μέρος δεμάτια ἐννέα, τοῦ χωροδότου δὲ δεμάτιον ἕν.

c) Le «tiers», τρίτον. Ce type de contrat, bien connu grâce à un formulaire du XIVe siècle et à un acte patriarcal de 1401, était pratiqué à Byzance dès avant le début du XIIe siècle, puisqu'on trouve mention à cette époque de τριττωταί à côté des δεκατισταί[56]. Deux tiers de la récolte vont au locataire, qui fournit la totalité de la semence, un tiers de la récolte va au propriétaire, qui est responsable du paiement de l'impôt foncier. Une variante de ce type de contrat, attestée en Italie en 980, prévoit que le propriétaire doit fournir un tiers de la semence[57]. Peut-être s'agit-il d'une forme ancienne de ce contrat, puisque la part du propriétaire n'est pas encore complètement dégagée ; mais il n'est pas possible de tirer de conclusion d'un exemple isolé et géographiquement éloigné des autres[58]. Le contrat fondé sur le tiers de la récolte est le dernier à apparaître dans nos sources.

Des trois formes de contrat mentionnées ci-dessus, la dernière est celle qui se rapproche le plus du pakton : semence fournie par le locataire, impôt foncier payé par le propriétaire, à ceci près que la *mortè* du tiers faisait que le propriétaire était coresponsable en cas de mauvaise récolte, alors que le pakton le dégageait de toute responsabilité. D'autre part, le pakton fournissait au propriétaire un revenu en espèces, fort convoité, ce qui, pour le locataire qui devait trouver des pièces d'or, pouvait ne pas aller sans difficultés en période de pénurie de numéraire. Par conséquent, en raison des avantages qu'il présentait pour le propriétaire, on est en droit de penser que le pakton représentait un revenu inférieur à celui du «tiers».

D'importants renseignements sont fournis sur ces questions dans des textes relatifs à des prêts agricoles — donc aux revenus qu'un bailleur de fonds pouvait, selon la loi, retirer du prêt qu'il faisait à un agriculteur. Au § 67 de la *Loi agraire*, nous lisons :

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[53] Nous connaissons même un cas où la dîme d'un champ est partagée par moitié entre le propriétaire et le seigneur de quelques parèques qui l'ont loué : *Chilandar* n° 30.

[54] *EEBS*, 3, 1926, p. 133.

[55] P. GAUTIER, Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite contre Alexis Ier Comnène, *REB*, 28, 1970, p. 31, et n. 19 et 20 p. 30. Je ne crois pas qu'il s'agisse ici d'un terme technique.

[56] *Ibidem*.

[57] KAŽDAN, *Derevnja*, p. 93 (= *Codex diplomaticus cavensis*, Naples, 1873-1893, n° 318).

[58] Il n'est pas impossible qu'une redevance égale au tiers du produit de la pêche ait existé dès le VIIIe siècle. Théodore Stoudite, dans la lettre qu'il adresse à l'impératrice Irène pour la féliciter des allégements fiscaux qu'elle avait accordés, affirme que dès lors «le pêcheur qui aurait pris trois poissons après avoir durement peiné tout le jour ne sera plus tenu d'en donner un (au fisc)» : ὁ ἁλιεὺς τυχὸν τρεῖς ἰχθύας ἀνελκύσας καὶ τοῦτο πάντως πολλὰ κεκοπιακὼς δι' ὅλης ἡμέρας, τὸν ἕνα οὐκ ἀποτίννυσιν (*PG* 99, c. 932). Je comprends qu'il s'agit d'une redevance comparable aux ennomia : la mer ou la rivière étant propriété de l'État, le pêcheur qui les exploitait était considéré comme «locataire» et devait verser au fisc un tiers de la «récolte» : ce serait l'équivalent de la ὑπὲρ τοῦ τόπου... πρόσοδος mentionnée à propos de droits de pêche dans la novelle 56 de Léon VI le Sage.

«Si certains ont reçu des champs au lieu (de toucher) des intérêts et les ont exploités pour plus de sept ans, le juge devra voir combien (de temps est passé) après les sept ans et compter toute la 'contribution moyenne' (de ces années après la septième) comme (remboursement) du capital»[59].

Il me semble que la «contribution moyenne» mentionnée ici est l'*hèmiseia*, type de contrat connu précisément par la *Loi agraire* (cf. *supra*). C'est le revenu qui devait normalement aller au propriétaire de la terre, mais qui va maintenant au bailleur de fonds en remplacement des intérêts que le propriétaire lui doit. C'est un cas clair d'*antichrèsis*.

La pratique, sans doute générale, décrite ici, serait de fournir comme gage d'un emprunt agricole une terre (de valeur approximativement égale à celle de la somme empruntée) et de remplacer le paiement des intérêts, au bailleur de fonds qui exploite la terre à la place du propriétaire, par le revenu de cette terre. La limite de sept ans introduite par le législateur aurait comme but d'empêcher que la propriété de la terre change de main en raison de la prescription, le remboursement du capital étant assuré par l'exploitation de la terre par le bailleur de fonds après la septième année. En effet, étant donné que très probablement l'agriculteur qui empruntait était pauvre, la terre qu'il mettait en gage était une partie, ou la totalité, de celle qu'il cultivait lui-même, et il devenait le locataire de sa propre terre pendant toute la durée de l'emprunt. Si cette pratique n'avait pas été contrôlée, elle aurait abouti à l'asservissement progressif des populations rurales — ce contre quoi s'élève l'auteur de la *Loi agraire*.

Une situation semblable est décrite dans la novelle 32 de Justinien, qui interdit la mise en gage de champs et précise que dans le milieu rural, l'intérêt annuel est fixé à 4,16% pour les prêts en espèces et à 12,5% (ὀγδόη μοῖρα) pour ceux en nature (par exemple blé, orge, etc.)[60]. Dans les deux cas, les pourcentages sont ceux du capital prêté. La différence entre les deux taux doit refléter la difficulté qu'il y avait, pour l'emprunteur, à trouver le numéraire nécessaire pour payer les intérêts. Il était plus facile à l'agriculteur de disposer des produits en nature nécessaires. Les mêmes dispositions sont reprises dans une interpolation de la *Loi agraire*, mais dans une autre, l'intérêt en nature est ramené à 8,33%[61]. Il n'est malheureusement pas possible de dater ces interpolations. Ce qui reste cependant, c'est que, malgré la monétarisation de l'économie byzantine, des paiements en nature et des paiements en espèces théoriquement égaux pouvaient varier du simple au double, ou même au triple. C'est une réalité dont il faut tenir compte lorsqu'on veut évaluer ce que la terre rapportait, en argent ou en nature[62].

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[59] *Loi agraire*, p. 120–121 : Οἱ τόκου χάριν λαβόντες ἀγροὺς καὶ πλείω τῶν ἑπτὰ χρόνων φανῶσι καρπιζόμενοι τὸν ἀγρόν, ψηφισάτω ὁ ἀκροατὴς ἀπὸ τῆς ἑπταετίας καὶ τὴν ἄνω, (j'ai ajouté cette virgule) καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν κατὰ τὴν ἡμίσειαν εἰσφορὰν στοιχησάτω εἰς κεφάλαιον. Ce paragraphe a été discuté par A. Laiou, A Note on Farmer's Law Chapter 67, *Byz.*, 41, 1971, p. 197–204.

[60] *Nov. J.*, p. 239–240.

[61] *Loi agraire*, p. 135–136.

[62] Il me semble que le degré de monétarisation de l'économie byzantine a considérablement varié selon les époques : c'est ce qui ressort d'une enquête que j'ai faite dans les vies de saints de l'époque mésobyzantine : Σε ποιό βαθμό ήταν εκχρηματισμένη η Μεσοβυζαντινή οικονομία; (à paraître dans le volume en l'honneur de M. Manoussakas, Réthymno).

La productivité.

Ceci nous ramène à la question de la productivité de la terre, qui est d'habitude calculée en établissant, pour les céréales, le rapport entre la semence et la récolte moyenne. Dans le cas byzantin, nous savons que le modios de terre était la superficie dont l'ensemencement exigeait un modios de blé. Quelle était la récolte qu'on pouvait normalement espérer ?

Ici aussi, les sources sont rares. On peut cependant citer la *Vie de saint Nicolas de Sion,* qui se passe en Lycie au VIe siècle. Un couple d'agriculteurs possédaient un terrain sur lequel on pouvait ensemencer 25 grands modioi et ils n'arrivaient pas à en retirer une récolte qui fût supérieure à la semence. Réduits à la pauvreté, ils s'adressèrent au saint, semèrent la même quantité de grain que d'habitude (ἔϐαλον τὸν αὐτὸν μοδισμόν) et obtinrent une récolte de 125 grands modioi, à la suite de quoi ils remercièrent le saint que Dieu eût multiplié le produit de leur terre (πῶς ἐπλήθυνεν ὁ Θεὸς τοὺς καρποὺς τῆς χώρας αὐτῶν)[63]. D'après ce texte, une récolte cinq fois plus grande que la semence paraissait très bonne, mais pas nécessairement miraculeuse. Je m'en tiendrai à l'idée qu'un rendement 1 : 5 était considéré au VIe siècle dans cette région comme nettement supérieur à la moyenne.

Au XIe siècle, le praktikon d'Adam, qui atteste le pakton de 1 nomisma pour 10 modioi de terre, indique aussi que 12 modioi de blé étaient alors évalués, sur le lieu de production, pour un nomisma[64]. Si nous admettons que le pakton est inférieur au tiers d'une récolte moyenne (cf. *supra*, p. 333), la production normale de 10 modioi de terre (qui nécessitaient 10 modioi de semence) devait être, en moyenne, supérieure à 36 modioi, et d'une valeur supérieure à 3 nomismata[65]. Ceci suggère qu'il n'y a pas de différence de rendement qui soit révolutionnaire par rapport au VIe siècle, et qu'au XIe siècle encore, une récolte cinq fois plus grande que la semence devait être considérée comme très bonne, mais pas comme exceptionnelle.

La même situation se retrouve au XIVe siècle, puisque nous savons que le rendement des terres des Acciaiuoli oscillait entre 1,6 et 5 pour une unité de semence. Entre temps, nous rencontrons des auteurs du XIIe siècle (Eustathe de

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[63] La *Vie,* déjà publiée par G. Anrich, *Der heilige Nikolaos in der griechischen Kirche* I, Leipzig-Berlin, 1913, a été rééditée avec une traduction anglaise par I. et N. Ševčenko, *The Life of St Nicholas of Sion,* Brookline Mass., 1984 (notre texte est aux p. 92–94). Il est probable que le couple ici décrit possédait trop peu de terre et était obligé d'en louer à des voisins ; cette situation expliquerait comment il a réussi à survivre à plusieurs mauvaises récoltes consécutives.

[64] *Patmos* II, n° 50, l. 318, cf. p. 35. Le gérant du domaine doit recevoir 12 modioi de blé pour sa nourriture mais reçoit à la place 1 nomisma. Étant donné que cette quantité de blé lui était versée par le propriétaire, en l'occurrence l'empereur, je crois que l'équivalence indiquée reflète un juste prix.

[65] Vers la même époque, l'historien Michel Attaliate (Bonn, p. 230) nous apprend que le prix du blé à Constantinople avait atteint 18 modioi au nomisma. C'est un prix trop bas comparé à celui de Milet en 1073, surtout si l'on pense qu'à Milet on était sur le lieu de production, et que Constantinople était un grand marché de consommation. On se demandera donc si c'est le même modios dont il est question dans les deux cas. Sur le prix du blé à Byzance, voir ici-même Prix et salaires à Byzance (Xe-XVe siècles), p. 356–366.

Thessalonique, Grégoire Antiochos) qui parlent de rendements considérables, 1 : 20, 1 : 100, mais qui sont tout à fait invraisemblables, ou exceptionnels, voire impossibles si nous prenons seulement en considération les cultures extensives (propres aux céréales), qui économisent le travail humain, peu disponible, aux dépens du rendement[66].

Pour conclure, je proposerai l'idée que le rendement normal byzantin devait se situer autour de 4 à 5 pour 1. Ces chiffres ne sont pas trop loin de ceux qui ont été proposés jusqu'ici, 3 : 1[67], 4 : 1 (?)[68], 2,7 - 4,2 : 1[69], 5,2 : 1[70]. Ce sont des taux qui se comparent à ceux de l'Europe occidentale pendant le Moyen Âge[71]. Mais ce qui me semble significatif dans le cas byzantin, c'est l'impression, rendue incertaine par le manque de sources, que le rendement n'a pas changé de façon radicale entre le VIe et le XIVe siècle. Ce fait pourrait éclairer l'épanouissement de Byzance aux premiers siècles de l'Empire, et son déclin, qui coïncide avec les grands développements de l'agriculture en Occident, développements que les Byzantins n'auraient pas voulu — ou pas pu — suivre.

Retournons à la question initiale. Il me semble clair que le changement de la politique de l'État à l'égard des terres abandonnées, et sa décision de les exploiter directement, ne sont pas liés à une révolution agricole ; il est certain que le rendement des terres s'améliorait peu à peu, comme le montre la lente mais constante augmentation des impôts à travers toute la moyenne époque byzantine. Au XIVe siècle on n'avait plus besoin de l'intervention d'un saint pour obtenir une récolte cinq fois plus grande que la semence. Mais il est certain aussi que les ordres de grandeur n'ont pas changé de façon radicale, surtout pas entre le Xe et le XIe siècle.

Je crois donc que la réponse à la question du changement de politique doit plutôt être cherchée du côté de la démographie, qui pourrait aussi expliquer les réussites militaires des Byzantins sur tous les fronts, et peut-être aussi le développement des villes. Mais ceci est une autre question, fort difficile : si l'expansion byzantine des Xe-XIe siècles était due à un accroissement démographique, comment expliquer l'effondrement du XIe siècle ? Faut-il revenir à l'hypothèse de N. Svoronos[72], qui supposait que Byzance avait connu un déclin démographique aigu pendant la première moitié du XIe siècle ? Nous n'avons aucun renseignement précis sur l'évolution de la population byzantine sous les Macédoniens. Par conséquent, dans l'état actuel de notre documentation, toutes les hypothèses sont possibles, mais aucune n'est autorisée.

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[66] Renseignements réunis par A. Každan dans le *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* I, New York, 1982, p. 78. — Ces rapports seraient moins invraisemblables s'il s'agissait de cultures intensives et très soignées, comme celles auxquelles fait allusion F. Sigaut dans son Introduction (p. 47) à *L'évolution technique des agricultures européennes avant l'époque industrielle*, publiée par L'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Centre de recherches historiques, décembre 1985.

[67] SVORONOS, *Recherches...* (cité n. 38), p. 141.

[68] Th. USPENSKIJ, Nabljudenija po sel'sko-hozjajstvennoj istorii v Vizantii, *Žurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveščenija*, 259, 1888, p. 258–259.

[69] KAPLAN, *L'économie paysanne...* (cité n. 5), p. 219.

[70] N. KONDOV, Über den wahrscheinlichen Weizenertrag auf der Balkanhalbinsel im Mittelalter, *Études Balkaniques*, 10/1, 1974, p. 97–109.

[71] Voir par exemple G. DUBY, *L'économie rurale et la vie des campagnes dans l'Occident médiéval* I, Paris, 1962, p. 186 ; F. BRAUDEL, *Civilisation matérielle et capitalisme*, Paris, 1967, p. 91 ; SIGAUT (cité n. 66) ; V. FUMAGALLI, Rapporto fra grano seminato e grano raccolto nel polittico del monastero di San Tommaso di Reggio, *Rivista di Storia dell'Agricoltura*, 6, 1966, p. 360–362 (je dois cette référence à l'amabilité de J.-M. Martin).

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[72] N. SVORONOS, Société et organisation intérieure dans l'empire byzantin au XIe siècle : les principaux problèmes, *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, Londres, 1967, p. 373–389, réimp. dans ID., *Études*... (cité n. 38), IX.

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XII

LE MARCHAND BYZANTIN DES PROVINCES (IX^e-XI^e S.)

Nous savons peu de choses sur le marchand byzantin des provinces pendant le haut moyen-age. Les ambitions de ma présentation sont donc très limitées. Je tacherai de dégager quelques lignes générales, tout en soulignant le caractère provisoire de tout ce que je vais dire[1].

Pour ce faire, je diviserai la période à étudier en deux: 1) Les siècles obscurs, le 7e et le 8e s. et 2) la renaissance macédonienne, qui va du 9e au 11e s., jusqu'au moment où l'empire — et ses marchands — ont connu le point culminant de leur histoire avant la grande chute. Comme toute tentative de périodisation, celle que je propose est arbitraire, mais elle correspond, me semble-t-il, grosso modo, aux deux principaux types de vie commerciale qui caractérisent l'empire d'Orient. Comme toute périodisation, elle ne rend pas compte des zones grises; mais elle permet une certaine clarté dans la présentation.

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(1) La présente conférence reprend plusieurs points de vue qui ont été exprimés ces dernières années ailleurs, par d'autres et par moi-même. Voir en particulier: J. F. HALDON, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century. The Transformation of a Culture*, Cambridge 1990 (cité dorénavant: HALDON); A. HARVEY, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire*, Cambridge 1989 (cité dorénavant: HARVEY); M. HENDY, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy c. 300-1450*, Cambridge 1985 (cité dorénavant: HENDY). — La question du commerce et de l'artisanat à Byzance est vaste et reste obscure; des recherches spéciales et d'envergure, comme celles entreprises par Mademoiselle Marie Gerolymatou, sont nécessaires.

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Il faut d'abord définir ce qu'on entend par « marchand ». Pour cet exposé, j'ai adopté une définition restrictive: « celui qui achète des biens pour les revendre en faisant un bénéfice ». De cette façon, je laisse en principe de côté tous ceux qui vendent les biens qu'ils produisent eux-mêmes — je les laisse de côté sans les ignorer, car ces producteurs et vendeurs de biens se trouvent partout dans les opérations que nous allons décrire ci-dessous: il est souvent difficile sinon impossible de les distinguer des marchands « purs ». Ils appartiennent à deux groupes principaux:

1) Les artisans. Les Byzantins eux-mêmes faisaient clairement la distinction entre les artisans et les marchands. Les premiers, qui fournissaient un travail manuel, faisaient partie des organisations constantinopolitaines des métiers, dites *sômateia*, alors que les marchands « qui ne travaillent pas personellement, comme p. ex. les marchands d'étoffes de soie » appartenaient à des *systèmata*[2]. Il est évident que dans ce texte il y a aussi un jugement de valeur, le travail manuel ne pouvant que placer quelqu'un à un niveau subalterne: ce qui ne va pas sans contradictions, comme nous allons le voir. Evidemment la distinction entre marchand et artisan est souvent peu claire, d'autant plus que l'artisan possède souvent une boutique en ville et fait partie d'un corps de métier.

2) Les agriculteurs. Ceux-ci vendaient les surplus de leur production. Il n'y a pas de doute que ces agriculteurs constituaient une bonne partie, sinon la majorité, des membres des marchés ou des foires dont nous allons parler, tant comme vendeurs que comme acheteurs.

(2) Peira d'Eustathe le Romain 51, 7.

Cependant, c'est là une opération d'échange vraiment primaire, qui n'ajoute rien au portrait du marchand que nous voulons esquisser. D'ailleurs, les Byzantins qui parlent des agriculteurs vendant leurs produits au marché, n'ont jamais eu l'idée de les qualifier de commerçants.

Le marchand qui nous occupera dans ce qui suit, est avant tout homme de la ville, un citadin. Son travail est fondé sur la manipulation de l'argent. Il peut appartenir à deux types principaux: le propriétaire de boutique, qui ne se déplace point mais attend que les fournisseurs et les clients viennent à lui; et celui qui va chercher les produits et les porte aux clients en se déplaçant lui-même. Entre ces deux types extrêmes, il y a une multitude de situations intermédiaires et de nuances possibles. Dans le processus de son propre enrichissement, le marchand véhicule d'une façon ou de l'autre les biens, parfois aussi les idées. Il prend des risques économiques, et des risques physiques pour arriver à ses fins. Son existence même dépend de l'existence d'une société autour de lui qui s'intéresse aux services qu'il offre.

L'utilité des marchands pour la société n'a jamais été contestée; cependant, ils ont fait l'objet d'un préjugé défavorable[3]: la loi romaine et byzantine, hostile à l'idée du profit, hostile aussi à la manipulation de l'argent, leur a constamment interdit l'accès du sénat, c'est à dire les a exclus de l'aristocratie. C'était là un désaveu social qui toucha également les artisans, sans doute à cause du fait qu'ils se confondaient souvent avec les marchands, soumis aussi à des corps de métier. Par contre, ce pré-

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(3) Voir ANGELIKI LAIOU, *God and Mammon: Credit, Trade, Profit and the Canonists*, « Byzantium in the 12th Century: Canon Law, State and Society », ed. N. OIKONOMIDES, Athens 1991, pp. 285 et suiv.

jugé n'a point existé au sujet des producteurs agricoles, même s'ils allaient au marché pour vendre leurs surplus.

Ainsi, les marchands n'ont pas fait partie de l'aristocratie byzantine, qui resta composée essentiellement de fonctionnaires et de propriétaires terriens. Le sénat leur fut ouvert pour peu de temps au 11^{e} s.[4], mais leur fut vite fermé à nouveau avec l'argument que le profit du commerce (τὸ τῆς πραγματείας... κέρδος) et la participation à un systèma soumis à l'éparque, sont incompatibles avec la grandeur du titre de sénateur[5].

1. LES SIÈCLES OBSCURS (7e-8e S.): LES MARCHANDS DE L'ÉTAT

Avec la disparition des cités antiques, et la ruralisation de l'empire d'Orient, les formes développées de la vie municipale et de la vie économique en particulier disparaissent. Cependant Byzance diffère sur ce point de l'Europe occidentale, en ce qu'une économie de marché a tant bien que mal survécu pendant les siècles obscurs. Elle était centrée sur Constantinople et était sans doute limitée, surtout en province, mais elle subsistait: car plusieurs centres urbains, bien que décadents, n'avaient point cessé d'exister, comme le montre la survivance de leurs évêchés, surtout en Asie Mineure[6].

Il y avait donc des marchands, même si les textes en parlent peu. Leurs caractère était sans doute tributaire des origines du système dont ils faisaient partie. C'était la continuation de la tradition urbaine antique. Ce mode de vie s'est écroulé en Occident à cause des

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(4) P. LEMERLE, *Cinq études sur le onzième siècle byzantin*, Paris 1975, p. 287 et suiv.

(5) J. et P. ZÉPOS, *Jus Graecoromanum* I, Athènes 1931, p. 645.

(6) HARVEY, p. 23.

invasions barbares, alors qu'en Orient il n'y a pas eu d'écroulement formel.

Mais là aussi, ce monde connut une profonde décadence avant même les grandes invasions de la fin du 6e et du 7e siècle. C'était un monde malade, dont les villes, grandes et ornées de magnifiques bâtiments, déclinaient. Les portiques monumentaux ont vu leurs arcades se remplir de murs pour construire des taudis à l'usage des populations migrantes des campagnes. Il n'y avait plus réparations dignes de ce nom, sauf celles commanditées par l'empereur. Ainsi, au 6e et au 7e siècle, lorsqu'il y a eu des événements extérieurs qui ont ébranlé les villes et ont détruit leurs bâtiments — que ce soit les attaques des Perses, ou des Slaves, ou de simples tremblements de terre — il y a eu un phénomène extraordinaire, caractéristique de ce qu'on a appelé la chute du monde antique: bien que les ennemis furent repoussés, personne n'a pris en charge à réparer les batiments des villes. Dans certains cas, les colonnades avec leurs arcs sont restées là où elles étaient tombées et ont été retrouvées intactes par les archéologues. Les grandes villes ont été abandonées par leurs habitants qui sont le plus souvent allés s'installer sur une colline du voisinage pour créer une nouvelle agglomération fortifiée, petite, ressemblant à un village[7].

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(7) Le problème intéresse naturellement les savants depuis longtemps. La question fut placée sur une nouvelle base avec les recherches archéologiques et numismatiques de C. FOSS, qui a pourtant abouti à des conclusions moins convaincantes, étant donné qu'il a attribué cette chute du monde antique à des événements extérieurs, telles les invasions. D'ailleurs, les archéologues, comme M. BAKIRTZIS, qui ont découvert les vestiges les plus parlants de cette chute, l'ont en partie attribuée aussi a des phénomènes naturels, tels les tremblements de terre. Des interprétations plus pondérées sont proposées par HÉLÈNE SARADI, *The Demise of the Ancient City and the Emergence of the Medieval City in the Eastern Roman Empire*, « Echos du Monde Classique/Classical Views » 32 (7) (1988), pp. 365-401; *Christian Attitudes toward Pagan Monuments in Late Antiquity and their Legacy in Later Byzantine Centuries*, « Dumbarton Oaks Papers » 44 (1990), pp. 47-61; et par HALDON: ils y ont vu l'aboutissement d'une longue

C'était le début du Moyen Age, que l'on peut situer, pour Byzance, au 7e siècle, malgré le fait que, en réalité, il ait dû commencer bien plus tôt. Une certaine économie fermée et fondée sur l'autarcie s'y est installée. Seule Constantinople, qui n'avait jamais cessé d'être une grande ville, constituait un important marché de consommation — en fait le seul marché de consommation digne de ce nom[8]. C'est pourquoi, la capitale byzantine et ses environs immédiats ont constitué une zone économique à part: pour y accéder, le marchand, byzantin ou étranger, devait subir des contrôles rigides et payer des droits spéciaux aux deux postes établis dans ce but par Justinien Ier au 6e siècle: Abydos, à l'entrée des Dardanelles, et Hiéron, à l'entrée du Bosphore. L'empire était ainsi divisé — et ce dès le 6e siècle — en deux zones économiques de calibre et de fonctionnement différents: une zone économique de consommation de la capitale et une zone d'économie plus rudimentaire dans toutes les provinces[9].

En plus, avec l'arrivée des Arabes sur les rives de la Méditerranée, celle-ci, qui jadis unissait les provinces romaines, devint une frontière âprement disputée. La circulation des biens a baissé, et était opérée par des agents de l'état plutôt que par des particuliers.

Une particularité byzantine, fut l'usage ininterrompu de la monnaie, suivant le système tri-metallique établi par Constantin le Grand. L'émission de monnaies est attes-

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décadence conduisant au changement du mode de vie, intervenu avant — ou tout au plus parallèlement — à la destruction des bâtiments.

(8) Même ce point de vue fut contesté par C. MANGO, *Le développement urbain de Constantinople (IVe-VIIe s.)*, Paris 1985.

(9) J'ai exprimé mon point de vue à ce sujet dans *Le kommerkion d'Abydos, Thessalonique et le commerce bulgare au IXe siècle*, « Hommes et richesses dans l'empire byzantin » éd. par V. KRAVARI, J. LEFORT et C. MORRISSON II, Paris 1992, p. 241 e suiv.

tée pour tous les règnes de la période. Mais leur circulation réelle pose des problèmes par endroits et pendant certaines périodes[10]. Ainsi, les trouvailles monétaires en Grèce du sud avant le milieu du 9e s. sont très faibles (ceci est vrai pour des villes comme Thessalonique, Athènes, même Corinthe, la ville la plus développée de la région[11]) ce qui montre que la vie économique pouvait encore se faire, au moins dans certaines régions, par du troc. Ailleurs elle était sans doute plus active.

Cette monnaie est avant tout utilisée pour payer les salaires, en particulier les salaires des soldats. Elle revient à la caisse publique sous forme d'impôts: en effet, les impôts perçus en nature se raréfient de plus en plus; l'impôt de base est complétement monétarisé déjà au début du 9e siècle[12].

La caractéristique principale des marchands pendant les « siècles obscurs » me semble être qu'ils agissent au nom et avec l'appui de l'état, pour le moins ceux de haut niveau; ce sont des hommes d'affaires doublés de fonctionnaires. Puisqu'ils travaillent pour l'état, ils ne sont pas affectés par le caractère « déshonorant » de leur métier, lié à la manipulation de l'argent.

Nous les rencontrons maintenant à Constantinople aussi bien que dans les provinces; ce sont des hommes particulièrement riches qui forment souvent des associations pour prendre en ferme certaines activités économi-

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(10) Voir surtout HENDY, passim.

(11) Communication de Mme B. PENNAS, dont la thèse de doctorat, soutenue à Oxford, porte justement sur la circulation monétaire en Hellade au haut Moyen Age; HARVEY, 21.

(12) Les vies de saints montrent clairement que du 9e au 11e s. pratiquement tous les échanges se font en argent comptant, le troc ayant un caractère très marginal. Cf. HARVEY, 86 et suiv. et N. OIKONOMIDES, Σε ποιό βαθμό ήταν εχχρηματισμένη η Μεσοβυζαντινή οικονομία; à paraître dans le volume en l'honneur de M. Manoussakas, Rethymno.

ques, au nom de l'état. Ce sont les *kommerkiarioi* [13], des hommes proches de la cour, avec des titres honorifiques brillants, avec des appuis évidents dans l'entourage de l'empereur; la faveur impériale leur permet de dominer certaines activités pendant tel règne, mais sou-

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(13) Je reprends ici mon point de vue sur les kommerkiarioi, que j'ai exposé dans *Silk Trade and Production in Byzantium from the Sixth to the Ninth Century: the Seals of Kommerkiarioi*, « Dumbarton Oaks Papers » 40 (1986), pp. 33-53. Ce point de vue a été mal résumé pour être contesté par HALDON, p. 232 et suiv.: je n'ai jamais dit que les kommerkiarioi ne faisent que le commerce de la soie (voir p. 47, col. 1 de mon article); ce que j'ai écrit, et auquel je tiens, c'est que les kommerkiarioi avaient le *monopole* sur la soie pour une année donnée et dans une province donnée, et que leurs sceaux avec l'effige de l'empereur étaient utilisés justement pour leurs opérations concernant la soie (ce qui ne veut point dire qu'ils n'avaient pas d'autres activités). Cette hypothèse est fondée sur le fait qu'au moins deux textes lient le kommerkiarios à la soie; et au fait que les mêmes personnes qui étaient kommerkiarioi étaient aussi archontes tou blattiou (préposés à la teinture à la pourpre) possédant aussi des sceaux à effigie impériale. Je ne vois donc pas comment cette hypothèse serait affaiblie par des vagues considérations climatiques (l'Asie Mineure orientale ne pourrait pas produire assez de feuilles de mûrier: mais ceci aurait pu être un argument si l'on avait insisté sur le fait que la production était massive; d'ailleurs, l'Asie Mineure orientale a été vite abondonnée par les kommerkiarioi); non plus que par l'assertion que la soie ne pouvait pas être utilisée pour des paiements (nous savons cependant que les étoffes de soie, surtout celles de couleur pourpre, constituaient une marchandise très recherchée par les étrangers, qui faisait l'objet de clauses spéciales dans les traités, cf. infra); ou par la déclaration que la production de soie à cette époque soit « inherently unlikely ». Si la culture de la soie fut introduite à Byzance au 6e s. et était généralisée au 9e, il faut bien accepter qu'elle s'est développée au cours de ces siècles obscurs.

Haldon revient à l'hypothèse de Hendy comme quoi les apothèkai des kommerkiarioi étaient liées à la distribution d'armement aux troupes en vue d'une campagne donnée. Je ne vois aucune raison pour accepter cette théorie, d'autant plus qu'elle n'est appuyé par aucun texte et est fondée uniquement sur la remarque voulant que certaines apothèkai apparaissent dans des régions où l'empereur byzantin préparait des campagnes, « the close connection between known military undertakings and the seals of kommerkiarioi » (HALDON, p. 237); or cette assertion est pour le moins très contestable sinon arbitraire; sans parler des dates, qui souvent ne coïncident pas (HALDON, p. 235: seals of... 694/5 post-date the campaigns for which... they were mobilised), je me poserai une question plus simple: quel rapport peut-il exister entre une apothèke des Cyclades et une campagne en Thrace ou en Afrique? ou entre une apothèke de Crète ou de l'Helenopontos (région de Sinope) et une campagne en Thrace (HALDON, p. 234?) Puis comment expliquer le fait que les kommerkiarioi s'éloignent de la frontière orientale sous les Isauriens? Changement de stratégie parce que les Balkans étaient plus contestés (HALDON, p. 237)? Il n'y a pas un seul kommerkiarios en Asie Mineure entre 730 et 755/6, une région qui était en ces temps pour le moins tout aussi contestée que les Balkans (pensons, entre autres, à l'importante bataille d'Akroinon).

vent ils disparaissent aussitôt que leur protecteur est renversé, ce qui montre à quel point leur ascension était liée à un certain favoritisme. Ils ont le droit d'utiliser des sceaux de plomb avec le portrait de l'empereur, qui leur a octroyé la charge. Ils sont liés à l'organisation de la production, de la teinture et du commerce de la soie, et ce avec juridiction sur des régions et pour des périodes limitées (d'habitude chaque fermage porte sur une ou deux provinces bien définies et dure un ou deux ans). La soie, marchandise de luxe par excellence, constituait alors et, par la suite, constituera encore plus un produit national des plus importants pour l'économie byzantine: dans une économie monétarisée, la soie impériale, jouait aussi le rôle d'une seconde monnaie, permettant au souverain de payer une partie des salaires en étoffes de soie (c'est ce que les empereurs faisaient certainement au 9e s.). Ces étoffes, surtout de couleur pourpre (et les cuirs de la même couleur) constituaient des produits très recherchés dans l'empire aussi bien que dans l'étranger. En autorisant leur exportation au compte-gouttes, Byzance maintenait la demande et le prix à des niveaux très élevés.

Ces échanges avec l'éntranger (en fait, il s'agissait largement de troc, surtout lorsqu'il s'agissait de voisins peu développés économiquement, tels les Bulgares) rapportaient aux agents de l'état d'autres marchandises qu'ils pouvaient placer sur le marché intérieur. On échangeait à des endroits fixes de la frontière, où les marchands des deux côtés se rencontraient sous la surveillance des agents de l'état. Les échanges avec les Bulgares, par exemple, se faisaient, selon le traité de 716, à Mesembria et la quantité des objets de luxe qui leur étaient vendus était strictement limitée. Après la chute de cette ville (812) et malgré sa reprise par les Byzantins (ca 864), les échanges se feront continuellement jusqu'au 10e s. à Debeltos[14].

Les mêmes hommes d'affaires faisaient des échanges en grande échelle à d'autres niveaux, et avec des marchandises autres que la soie: concentration — et, nous pouvons le supposer, mise sur le marché — des surplus agricoles par le fermage des impôts, dont certains étaient versés en nature; commerce des esclaves, qui à cette époque jouaient encore un rôle important dans l'économie des villes aussi bien que des campagnes. Nous connaissons un cas de la fin du 7e siècle où une vente d'esclaves (de quasi toute une tribu slave réfractaire) fut entreprise par un seul homme d'affaires/fermier pour tout l'empire. Elle s'est opérée surtout dans les provinces, comme le montrent les sceaux conservés, sans doute parce que la demande de main d'oeuvre servile y était plus grande. Ce fut sans doute une opération monstre, tout à fait inhabituelle. Et certainement une opération très profitable[15].

A côté des ces grands marchands-fonctionnaires il devait y en avoir d'autres, plus petits, qui se spécialisaient dans la vente au détail ou dans le transport. Mais nous les connaissons à peine. Nous savons qu'il y avait une foire à Saint Jean le Théologien d'Ephèse, dont le chiffre d'affaires annuel dépassait, en 795, les cent livres

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(14) N. OIKONOMIDES, *Tribute or Trade? The Byzantine-Bulgarian Treaty of 716*, « Studia Slavico-Byzantina et Medievalia Europensia » 1 (1988) [in memoriam I. Dujčev], pp. 29-31.

(15) Voir mon *Silk Trade*..., pp. 51-53; il faut maintenant ajouter la publication d'un nouveau sceau de ce même George concernant la province de l'Asie (S. BENDALL, *Slaves or Soldiers?* « Nomismatika Chronika » 8 [1989], pp. 41-43; la pièce a par la suite été achetée par la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris: « Revue de la Bibliothèque Nationale » 37 [automne 1990], p. 55). Cette pièce est datée de l'indiction 7 (693/4), donc d'un an avant toutes les autres; elle montre que cette vente d'esclaves a dû commencer quelques mois avant août 694, pour continuer dans une échelle tout autre en l'année qui va du 1er septembre 694 au 31 août 695.

d'or (7200 solidi)[16]: vu de notre perpective, ce chiffre, qui est approximatif, peut paraître très petit ou très grand. Il paraît petit lorsqu'on pense que, sans aucun doute, la foire de Saint Jean était l'événement économique majeur de la région. Mais il paraît grand quand on pense que la ville ancienne d'Ephèse était alors abandonnée et était remplacée par la bourgade dite Theologos; et que la région environnante, ruralisée, avait une économie que l'on croirait fondée avant tout sur l'autarcie au niveau local. Des chiffres comme celui de la foire de Saint Jean, ainsi que le témoignage de la Vie de Saint Grégoire le Décapolite qui parle du commerce maritime entre Ephèse et Constantinople[17], nous permettent de dire que, avant et après l'an 800, cette économie était beaucoup moins autarcique — et beaucoup plus fondée sur les échanges — qu'on ne le pense.

Cette économie d'échanges limités avait naturellement besoin de moyens de transport afin de mettre les marchandises à la disposition des consommateurs. Les transports étaient alourdis par toutes sortes de péages qui augmentaient le prix à la consommation; sur terre ils étaient perçus par des « effrayants » gardes de défilés; sur mer par les autorités d'Abydos et d'Hiéron. C'était là un revenu pour l'état et un poids pour les budgets individuels[18].

Le transport maritime, bien que plus efficace que le transport par terre, était plus dangereux; aux aléas de la mer, s'ajoutaient les menaces ennemies. Bien entendu, la Mer Noire restait, à toutes fins pratiques, un lac byzantin; mais son intérêt économique, surtout en ce qui con-

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(16) Theophanis Chronographia, ed. DE BOOR, I, p. 469. Cf. les doutes, non justifiés à mon avis, de HARVEY, p. 27.

(17) Ed. DVORNIK, p. 53.

(18) MIGNE, *Patrologia graeca* 99, col. 932.

cerne les échanges, était encore relativement limité au 8e s. En revanche, les corsaires arabes infestaient toute la Méditerranée et les mers adjacentes au point de forcer les populations byzantines à chercher refuge sur la montagne, dans des endroits fortifiés. Les petits bateaux et les barques qui assuraient le transport entre les ports de province étaient donc condamnés tôt ou tard à être les victimes des corsaires. Le gouvernement favorisa la dissolution de cette marine marchande proviciale, trop exposée, et s'appliqua à en employer le potentiel humain pour renforcer la marine de guerre. Par contre, ce même gouvernement choisit, au début du 9e siècle, d'investir dans la marine marchande de la capitale en fournissant aux « grands armateurs de Constantinople » les moyens financiers pour mieux armer leurs navires et les lancer à des opérations profitables. Ce fut là encore un pas envers la centralisation de la vie économique à la capitale[19].

Il va sans dire que les hommes d'affaires byzantins devaient faire face au problème éternel de la concentration du capital par des emprunts et par la constitution d'associations d'affaires.

Malgré la condamnation du prêt à intérêt par l'Eglise, les empereurs Byzantins étaient beaucoup trop réalistes pour tenter sérieusement de l'intendire. Ils ont donc choisi de l'autoriser officiellement, afin de mieux le contrôler. Dans la législation de Justinien nous trouvons les premiers « plafonds »: les sénateurs peuvent demander jusqu'à 4%, le gros de la population jusqu'à 6%, les hommes

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(19) C'est mon interprétation des deux dernières vexations de l'empereur Nicéphore Ier qui ont fait l'objet de longues discussions. On consultera AIK. CHRISTOPHILOPOULOU, Ἡ οἰκονομικὴ καὶ δημοσιονομικὴ πολιτικὴ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Νικηφόρου Α', « Τόμος εἰς μνήμην Κ. Ἀμάντου », Athènes 1960, pp. 413-443; cf. MÊME AUTEUR, Βυζαντινὴ Ἱστορία II/1, Athènes 1981, pp. 165-171 (avec analyse des opinions exprimées précédemment).

d'affaires jusqu'à 8%, et les prêts à haut risque qu'étaient les prêts maritimes, pouvaient aller jusqu'à 12%. Il est évident qu'avec ces arrangements on décourageait la participation de l'artistocratie au marché des capitaux, et on encourageait le financement des entreprises à risque qui pouvaient rapporter des bénéfices importants[20].

En ce qui concerne les associations d'affaires, la législation impériale est aussi libérale qu'elle peut l'être: elle fournit un cadre souple qui peut s'adapter à n'importe quel besoin. C'est la *chreokoinonia*[21]: les ressources mises en commun pour l'entreprise peuvent être le capital ou le travail personnel ou les deux; l'association se fait d'habitude pour un temps limité (ou pour un voyage précis) — un temps pendant lequel la responsabilité collective est en vigueur; dès le début, la contribution de chacun est évaluée et, du coup, la part des bénéfices (ou des pertes) est fixée. Ce sont des associations sans doute renouvelables, souvent avec les mêmes partenaires. Ce caractère temporaire des associations est même visible dans le cas des kommerkiarioi qui prenaient en ferme les entreprises de l'état, notamment la soie.

Il est important pour nous de souligner que la *chreokoinonia*, telle que définie dans la législation, s'applique à une économie d'échanges à distance. C'est une caractéristique à retenir lorsqu'on parle de la vie byzantine pendant les siècle obscurs.

2. LA RENAISSANCE MACÉDONIENNE (9e-11e s.): COMMERCE RÉGLEMENTÉ VERSUS COMMERCE LIBRE

L'amplification de la circulation monétaire au 9e siècle ouvrit des nouvelles avenues aux commerçants. Des

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(20) Sur la question des intérêts et de leur évolution, voir en dernier lieu, LAIOU, *God and Mammon*, pp. 261 et suiv. (avec indications bibliographiques).

(21) Nomos Rodion Nautikos, paragr. 17 et suiv.

formes d'affaires plus diversifiées devinrent possibles; et les attitudes monopolistes de l'état et de ses fermiers perdaient leur raison d'être; un nouvel esprit « capitaliste » entrait en scène. Ceci est vrai même pour les individus qui n'étaient pas dans les affaires, et qui se mirent à « consommer » à une toute autre échelle. Nous voyons, par exemple, le métropolite de Nicée commander à l'évêque d'Hélénoupolis du sel pour une valeur totale de 12 pièces d'or: celà représentait des quantités considérables qui ne pouvaient servir que si l'on voulait saler des aliments, en l'occurence les poissons[22]. Nous voyons aussi le métropolite de Synada Léon se faire porter de la nourriture du thème des Thracésiens, d'Attaleia et même de Constantinople[23].

Il y a aussi amplification des formes de vie citadines à l'intérieur de l'empire. Les villes de province gagnent en importance. Leurs habitants sont appelés « hommes de la ville », ἀστικοί[24]. Le terme *emporion*, désignant le marché aussi bien que le faubourg, est de plus en plus fréquemment utilisé. A part les foires, on trouve maintetant des marchés permanents. Nous avons même, au 11e siècle, des révoltes urbaines dans les provinces, dirigées contre les autorités: par exemple à Naupaktos en 1025/26[25]. Il faut noter que les révoltés avaient l'appui des autorités ecclésiastiques, du métropolite, qui s'est tourné contre le représentant de l'empereur, à savoir le stratège.

Tout ceci est naturellement lié à l'expansion géographique que Byzance a connu à partir du milieu du 9e

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(22) M. GEDEON, *Néa bibliothèkè ekklèsiastikôn syggraféôn*, Constantinople 1903, I, p. 13.

(23) HARVEY, p. 164.

(24) Ἅγιος Εὐγένιος, ὁ πολιοῦχος τῆς Τραπεζοῦντος, éd. O. LAMPSIDES, Athènes 1984, p. 88.

(25) Skylitzes, THURN, p. 372.

siècle, surtout entre le milieu du 10e et le milieu du 11e. Les conquêtes de Jean Kourkouas, de Nicéphore Phokas, de Jean Tzimiskes et de Basile II ont ajouté des nouvelles populations et des nouvelles villes à l'empire: des nouvelles sources de matières premières et de produits manufacturés et des nouveaux marchés pour écouler la marchandise. En plus, la reconquête de la Crète par les Byzantins (961) et leur suprématie maritime sur le califat rétablit la sécurité des mers et du littoral. Les communications maritimes s'intensifient; les villes réapparaissent sur le litoral, les ports se multiplient; le besoin de servir les citadins s'accroît dans tout l'empire.

L'épanouissement des affaires ne pouvait qu'accroître la demande en capitaux. Cette tendance à la hausse se manifeste timidement à la fin du 9e siècle déjà, dans une novelle de Léon VI le Sage: le plafond des intérêts augmente officiellement d'environ 4,1%. Au 11e s. ils sont passés à un taux différent, bien plus élevé, de 5,55% pour les sénateurs, 8,33% pour le commun des mortels, 11,1% pour les hommes d'affaires, 16,66% pour les prêts maritimes. L'intérêt devenait plus alléchant mais le système voulait que les hommes les plus riches de l'empire, les aristocrates, restent en dehors de ce circuit d'activités pour des raisons de morale: le prêt à l'intérêt est toujours vu comme une activité profondément déshonorante[26]. Dans ses Conseils et Récits, Kékauménos[27], un militaire et aristocrate du 11e, désapprouve tout prêt d'argent, sauf ceux destinés au rachat de prisonniers; et il décrit les ruses qu'adopteront ceux qui veulent obtenir un prêt: ils feront tout pour gagner votre amitié et votre confiance et vous feront miroiter les profits extraor-

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(26) LAIOU, God and Mammon, p. 281.

(27) Ed. LITAVRIN, p. 212-216.

dinaires que promet telle marchandise. Il est évident que l'emprunteur-type est, aux yeux de Kekauménos, un marchand.

Pour illustrer l'évolution de la vie économique dans les villes de province, le cas de Thessalonique est caractéristique. Le manque de trouvailles monétaires jusqu'au milieu du 9e s., s'il n'est pas dû à un hasard, semblerait indiquer des activités économiques limitées et tournées vers les échanges en nature à cette haute époque. Ceci est compréhensible, si l'on pense que l'arrière-pays de Thessalonique était aux mains des Bulgares et des Slaves. Mais la situation s'améliorera dans la deuxième moitié du 9e s. avec l'effort concerté de deux hommes d'affaires constantinopolitains qui, avec l'appui de l'état, tâcheront de trasformer Thessalonique en une région économique comparable à celle de la capitale, avec un bureau appelé *abydos* et destiné à contrôler le trafic international[28].

A partir de ce moment, la ville sera renommée pour l'abondance des biens qu'on pouvait y trouver, biens de consommation et biens d'investissement; elle servait de débouché pour son arrière-pays balkanique, notamment les Bulgares, avec lesquels elle maintenait des contacts ininterrompus par les voies fluviales de l'Axios/Vardar et du Strymon, surtout après la conquête de la Bulgarie par Basile II. Aussi, Thessalonique était une étape importante de la principale route balkanique de l'empire, de la via Egnatia, et de ce fait elle attirait toujours de nombreux visiteurs qui y venaient faire leurs provisions. Elle était donc située sur le carrefour des routes fluviales nord-sud et de la route terrestre est-ouest.

Grand marché, nombreux échanges: au 10e s. on parle

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(28) C'est ce que j'ai développé dans *Le kommerkion d'Abydos, loc. cit.*

déjà du commerce d'or, d'argent, de pierres précieuses, d'étoffes de soie et de laine, du travail de tous les métaux, de la fabrication de verre. Dans la ville il y avait au moins deux marchés permanents, dont un etait appelé le marché inférieur ou le marché des Slaves, ce qui indique probablement les clients (et/ou les marchands) qui le fréquentaient[29]. Ces marchés désservaient la ville et sa région pour les besoins quotidiens.

En plus, il y avait un moment très spécial: lors de la fête de Saint Demetrius, le saint patron de la ville, une foire autrement plus importante, était, nous dit-on au 12e s., fréquentée par des marchands venus de l'Italie, de l'Europe Occidentale, de la Bulgarie et des peuples qui vivaient encore plus au nord que les Bulgares. Les marchands s'installaient sous tentes et vendaient toutes sortes de produits venant de partout dans le monde: de la Grèce et du Péloponnèse voisins, mais aussi de la Phénicie, l'Egypte, l'Espagne, etc. Même le Pont Euxin y participait avec ses produits, en les envoyant d'abord à Constantinople, puis en les trasportant à Thessalonique par des caravanes[30]. On ne peut pas s'empêcher de remarquer qu'aucun marchand de Constantinople ne figure dans ce texte, même pas à propos des marchandises du Pont qui devaient obligatoirement passer par la Ville afin d'emprunter la via Egnatia pour Thessalonique. On dirait que les marchands de la Mer Noire contournaient Constantinople pour arriver, sans passer par des intermédiaires, à cette foire de Thessalonique, la deuxième ville de l'empire[31].

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(29) *Actes de Docheiariou*, ed. N. OIKONOMIDES, Paris 1984, no. 4, l. 27, 84, p. 79, 80.

(30) Pseudo-Luciano, *Timarione*, ed. R. ROMANO, Naples 1974, p. 53-55.

(31) Constantin Porphyrogénète mentionne au 10e siècle un itinéraire conduisant d'abord vers le nord, de Thessalonique à Belgrade, puis vers l'est, au Dniepr, à la Crimée, à la Mer d'Azov jusqu'au Caucase. Ceci semble être un tentative d'unir Thessa-

Les foires deviennent nombreuses et importantes[32]; elles se répètent au même endroit chaque année; les paysans y vont pour vendre le surplus de leur production; ils y retrouvent chaque année les mêmes marchands, qui reviennent en portant dans leurs malles des marchandises et des sommes autrement plus considérables que du temps de la foire d'Ephèse. Un texte hagiographique du 10e s. nous décrit un tel marchand, qui partait d'une foire en Paphlagoine avec 1500 pièces d'or: un capital qu'il aurait réuni grâce à des emprunts et à des associations d'affaires et qui lui avait laissé des bénéfices considérables[33]. La foire est l'endroit où les marchands de province (ici aussi des marchands contantinopolitains ne sont point mentionnés, ce qui est significatif) viennent vendre et acheter ce qu'ils transporteront ailleurs. Ce sont des véritables marchands ambulants, qui vont d'une foire à l'autre et qui, on peut le supposer, desservent aussi les villages qui se trouvent sur leur itinéraire.

Les foires dont on a parlé jusqu'à maintenant, celle de Thessalonique aussi bien que celle de la Paphlagonie, semblent être les lieux où se faisait un commerce général à tous les niveaux, et où venaient des simples paysans qui vendaient leurs produits, et des importateurs de marchandise étrangère. Mais nous rencontrons aussi des foires spécialisées. Dans le thème des Anatoliques, à

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lonique au Pont Euxin, là où aboutissaient les routes du commerce d'Orient, en contournant délibérément Constantinople — qui pourtant se trouve au milieu de la route la plus courte et la plus profitable (puisque maritime) pour aller de Thessalonique au Pont Euxin: Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, ed. MORAVCSIK-JENKINS, ch. 42.

(32) Concernant les foires nous avons maintenant l'étude d'ANGELIKI LAIOU, *Händler und Kaufleute auf dem Jahrmarkt*, « Fest- und Alltag in Byzanz », ed. G. PRINZING et D. SIMON, Munich 1990, pp. 53-70, qui a discuté en détail la plupart des textes que je mentionnerai dans ce qui suit.

(33) *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, éd. H. DELEHAYE, Bruxelles 1902, coll. 720-724.

Augustopolis, se tenait, au dire de Masudi (10e s.) « une fois par an le marché des parfums »[34]. Il est évident que nous avons ici une opération économique plus sophistiquée, assurant la distribution des produits de luxe dans les provinces. Nous n'en savons malheureusement pas plus sur cette foire.

Dans les souces autour de l'an 1000, les mentions des foires se multiplient et la question se pose de savoir à qui, légalement, appartient le droit de foire: au propriétaire du lieu (donc au propriétaire terrien) ou bien aux marchands qui en se réunissant constituent la foire. Les marchands sont donc perçus comme une entité, comme une personne morale, avec des droits « collectifs ». Pour l'empereur Basile II aussi bien que pour le fameux juriste du 11e s. Eustathios Romaios, les marchands avaient le droit de déplacer la foire s'ils se mettaient d'accord, sans que les grands propriétaires terriens (qui revendiquaient le droit de foire) aient quoi que ce soit à dire. Ces opinions montrent sans doute l'hostilité bien connue des autorités de Constantinople envers les dynatoi; elles montrent peut-être aussi que les groupements de marchands avaient acquis au 11e s. un poids social considérable. En tout cas, elles montrent que les marchands devaient fonctionner dans un contexte libéral, non réglementé par l'état ou par qui que ce soit d'autre. La même image ressort d'un texte de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, le grand mystique byzantin du début du 11e s.: le marchand de la foire était à ses yeux le marchand par excellence, celui qui agissait en toute liberté, selon sa libre volonté, sans les limitations d'un réglement quelconque[35].

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(34) A. VASILIEV-M. CANARD, *Byzance et les Arabes* II/2, Bruxelles 1950, p. 400.

(35) Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, *Traités théologiques et ethiques*, ed. J. DARROUZÈS II, Paris 1967, pp. 384-399.

Les marchés permanents se sont aussi multipliés dans les villes de province. Par exemple, à Sparte, il y a au 10e s. un marché très actif, avec des artisans de toutes sortes, où viennent même commercer des marchands italiens[36]. Comme il est normal, se développent plus particulièrement les villes qui sont sur la route de Constantinople, comme p. ex. Nicomédie, Nicée, Proussa, Abydos, Cyzique, Pylai[37].

On ne peut pas éviter de faire ici mention spéciale du commerce avec les pays d'Orient. Il arrivait à l'empire par quatre routes principales et était naturellement centré sur Constantinople. 1) La route de l'extrême nord passait par le Don et la Crimée; 2) une deuxième route arrivait à Trébizonde et 3) une autre, plus au sud, à Theodosioupolis; 4) de la Syrie les marchandises se dirigeaient surtout vers Attaleia et Seleukeia[38].

Dès 837 l'empire avait renforcé sa présence en Crimée avec la création du thème de Klimata qui sera plus tard appelé thème de Cherson. Pour créer ce thème, l'empereur Théophile avait d'abord fondé la forteresse de Sarkel aux embouchures du Don, justement à l'endroit où aboutissait une route du commerce d'Orient et où sera plus tard fondé le fameux comptoir de la Tana. De la Crimée, les Byzantins pouvaient commercer avec les Russes, les Petchenègues et les autres peuples Turcs, notamment les Khazars, pour acquérir des produits d'Orient et autres marchandises locales, notamment des matières premières et des esclaves. Selon Constantin VII, les habitants de Cherson exportaient des cuirs et de la cire à

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(36) *The Life of Saint Nikon*, éd. D. SULLIVAN, Brookline Mass. 1987, pp. 118, 242, 250.

(37) HARVEY, p. 208.

(38) Trébizonde et Attaleia étaient les ports d'entrée les plus importants de l'empire byzantin: HARVEY, p. 213.

la côte nord de l'Asie Mineure, et ils s'y approvisionnaient en vivres[39]. Les traités byzantino-russes de 911 et de 944 parlent des bateaux marchands byzantins, qui risqueraient de faire naufrage près d'endroits tenus par les Russes[40].

Quoi qu'il en soit, le commerce entre la rive nord et la rive sud de la Mer Noire ne semble point, en temps normal, être soumis à des contrôles administratifs. Si bien que le Porphyrogénète recommande qu'en cas de révolte des Chersonites, des émissaires spéciaux de l'empereur (*basilikoi*) soient envoyés sur le littoral de l'Asie Mineure pour confisquer leurs bateaux et arrêter les équipages et pour empêcher le départ pour Cherson de tout bateau byzantin. Ce qui montre qu'il n'y avait pas d'institutions administratives locales pour surveiller ce va-et-vient entre les deux rives opposées de la Mer Noire.

La Chaldie et Trébizonde recevaient plusieurs caravanes venant de la Perse. Les marchands byzantins expédiaient la marchandise à Costantinople[41]. Les Trapézontins, marchands nombreux et riches (ἔμποροί τε πλεῖστοι καὶ ὄλβιοι)[42], exerçaient aussi le commerce à distance, se rendant jusqu'en Syrie (sinon plus loin) et y séjournant pendant longtemps[43].

Une autre route terrestre conduisait au centre de l'Asie Mineure orientale, au thème de Mésopotamie, dont le gouverneur avait comme seule ressource les revenus du kommerkion sur les marchandises d'Orient, et ce, tra-

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(39) *De Administrando Imperio*, ch. 53, l. 512 et suiv.

(40) Irène Sorlin, *Les traités de Byzance avec la Russie au Xe siècle*, « Cahiers du monde Russe et Soviétique » 2 (1961) pp. 334, 450.

(41) Livre du Préfet, 10, 2.

(42) A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Fontes Historiae Imperii Trapezuntini*, St. Petersbourg 1897, p. 58.

(43) Ἅγιος Εὐγένιος, p. 95-96.

ditionellement, dès le 9e s.[44]. Au 10e s. Théodosioupolis, en Arménie, recevait plusieurs caravanes d'Orient et peu après, Artze, dans le voisinage, devint le grand centre de ce même commerce; sur son marché, on trouvait, au dire d'Attaleiate, « toutes les marchandises qu'on apporte de la Perse, de l'Inde et du reste de l'Asie »[45]. Des caravanes grecques se dirigeant vers Alep et taxées à la frontière byzantino-arabe sont aussi attestées dans le traité de 969[46]. On vendait aussi, à Phasianè (Basean), à l'est de Théodosioupolis, des objets en verre, comme ces lampes que les Trapézontins y ont acheté en quantité et ont rapporté chez eux entassées dans des corbeilles[47].

Etant donné que les marchandises de luxe coûtaient des sommes élevées, on est tenté de penser que ces marchés servaient pour la vente en gros, pour approvisionner les autres marchands, notamment les marchands ambulants, qui devaient écouler les épices dans les provinces de l'empire, aux aristocrates, aux administrateurs et au haut clergé qui y habitait.

Sur la côte sud de l'Asie mineure, il y avait les ports d'Attaleia et de Seleukeia qui recevaient les bateaux syriens et égyptiens; parallèlement, les marchands byzantins d'Attaleia se rendaient eux-mêmes en Syrie pour commercer, peut-être aussi pour espionner un peu[48]. La marchandise orientale était portée à Constantinople soit

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(44) Cf. W. BRANDES, *Überlegungen zur Vorgeschichte des Themas Mesopotamien*, « Byzantinoslavica » 44/2 (1983), p. 171-177.

(45) *De Administrando Imperio*, pp. 208, 214; Attaleiate, Bonn, p. 148; Skylitzes, THURN, p. 451-2.

(46) M. CANARD, *Histoire de la dynastie des H'amdanides de Jazîra et de Syrie*, Alger 1951, pp. 835-836.

(47) PAPADOPOULOS-KERAMEUS, p. 107, 108.

(48) Attaleia: *Byzance et les Arabes* II/2, p. 416; Séleukeia: Livre du Préfet 5, 1.

par les Syriens eux-mêmes, soit par les marchands Byzantins de la côte sud de l'Asie Mineure[49].

Le marchand de province a donc d'importantes activités locales, interprovinciales et internationales. Curieusement, comme nous l'avons déjà signalé, il n'y a pas de constantinopolitains qui font le commerce en province — en tout cas, je n'en connais aucun qui soit attesté par les sources et, pour certains métiers, nous savons qu'il leur était expressément interdit d'aller commercer en province[50].

Ainsi, c'est le marchand de province qui se rend à Contantinople ou au voisinage de la ville; il y va pour vendre sa marchandise et pour acheter en vue de revendre en province. Tel, par exemple, un trapézontin du nom d'Ephraim, qui rapporta de Constantinople plusieurs corbeilles pleines de lampes en verre[51]; ou les trois marchands trapézontins du nom d'Eugène, qui ont dû témoigner au tribunal de la capitale en plein 10e s.[52]. Mais à chaque fois le marchand provincial (ἐξωτικός) est traité comme s'il était un étranger. Il est taxé, comme tout le monde, aux Détroits; si un étranger reçoit un privilège, il se voit strictement interdire de prendre sur ses bateaux des marchandises appartenant à des Byzantins[53]. En arrivant, le provincial doit se faire enregis-

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(49) Livre du Préfet 5, 1.

(50) Par exemple les marchands de soie grège: Livre du Préfet 6, 12.

(51) PAPADOPOULOS-KÉRAMEUS, pp. 88-89.

(52) PAPADOPOULOS-KÉRAMEUS, p. 141.

(53) Ainsi dans le chrysobulle de 992 en faveur des Vénitiens, l'empereur Basile II leur interdit de transporter à Constantinople des marchandises appartenant à d'autres, parmi lesquels sont nommés les Longobards et les habitants de Bari, qui étaient pourtant des sujets de l'empereur: ZÉPOS, *Jus Graecoromanum* I, p. 261. Ce qui, naturellement, veut dire que les Vénitiens pouvaient commercer librement dans les provinces de l'empire (on rappellera à ce sujet la présence de deux marchands Vénitiens à Sparte vers la fin du 10e siècle: cf. supra, note 36) au point qu'ils étaient susceptibles de se créer des amitiés et des solidarités significatives.

trer par l'éparque et ses services, notamment l'officier appelé *légatarios*, qui s'occupe aussi des étrangers; son séjour en ville ne peut pas dépasser trois mois; en partant, il est obligé de déclarer et faire approuver par l'éparque toute marchandise qu'il compte exporter[54]. L'état se méfie de lui: s'il vend des objets d'or ou d'argent, il doit expliquer comment il les a obtenus, « afin de découvrir les objets volés »[55]; les marchands de province (et les Juifs) sont considérés comme susceptibles de faire des exportations illégales de la zone économique de la capitale[56]. Il est expressément interdit de leur vendre des vêtements de valeur ou des esclaves entrainés à la fabrication de tels vêtements[57]. Il est évident que l'état se méfie d'eux parce qu'il ne peut pas les contrôler.

L'initiative privée est décrite par plusieurs textes qui parlent de certaines catégories de « marchands de moutons » qui achètent les troupeaux au lieu de l'élevage et les font venir jusqu'au Sangarios ou même jusqu'à Nicomédie pour les vendre aux bouchers constantinopolitains (seulement l'agneau de Pâques ils ont le droit de vendre à Constantinople même), et qui auraient tendance à empêcher les éleveurs eux-mêmes de venir vendre à la capitale[58]. Le même texte mentionne le lin, qu'on apportait à Constantinople du Strymon ou de Kerasous dans le Pont[59]: compte tenu de la distance, on a du mal à imaginer que tous ces vendeurs étaient des producteurs, sans intermédiaire.

L'état s'intéressait avant tout à réglementer la vie

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(54) Livre du Préfet 10, 2; 20, 1-3.

(55) Livre du Préfet 2, 6.

(56) Livre du Préfet 6, 16.

(57) Livre du Préfet 8, 3 et 7.

(58) Livre du Préfet 15, 3-5.

(59) Livre du Préfet 9, 1.

économique de Constantinople et à maintenir la paix sociale en interdisant la concurrence entre les membres des métiers organisés de la capitale. Ainsi, dans la Ville, les marchands sont obligés à contribuer à la caisse de leur métier pour acheter tous ensemble la marchandise importée, qui leur sera par la suite répartie au prorata de leurs contributions. Autrement dit, le prix d'achat de la marchandise devait être identique pour tous les membres d'un métier. La seule exception possible était la foire (πανήγυρις) tenue à Constantinople, à laquelle participaient les très petits producteurs (il est spécifié que les vendeurs à cette foire devaient porter leur marchandise sur leurs épaules, sans utiliser des boutiques ou des bancs[60]); lors de cette occasion, les échanges pouvaient se faire avec plus de liberté; mais là aussi l'état intervenait pour s'assurer qu'il n'y avait point concurrence illicite[61]. Il est probable, mais pas certain à mon avis, que cette réglementation soit devenue moins stricte au 12e[62].

Ainsi, lorsqu'ils venaient à Constantinople, les marchands des provinces se trouvaient souvent obligés de commercer eux aussi en cartel, lorsqu'il s'agissait de vendre leurs produits: les importateurs de soie, par exemple, aussi bien que les importateurs d'autres matières, se mettaient ensemble pour négocier avec le cartel des marchands de la capitale[63]; car la vente individuelle de la soie était strictement interdite[64]. Comme nous l'avons

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(60) Livre du Préfet 9, 7.

(61) Livre du Préfet 9, 2. Cf. PH. KOUKOULÈS, Βυζαντινῶν Βίος καὶ Πολιτισμός III, Athènes 1952, 273.

(62) A. P. KAZHDAN and ANN WHARTON EPSTEIN, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Univ. of California Press 1985, p. 52. Pour la question fort discutée des corps de métier constantinopolitains, voir la mise au point d'A. KAZHDAN dans *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* II, p. 887.

(63) Voir mon *Silk Trade*, 49.

(64) Livre du Préfet 8, 8.

signalé, ils faisaient librement leurs achats mais ils étaient soumis à des contrôles et des limitations quant aux marchandises qu'ils voudraient exporter.

Ces réglementations de la vie économique constantinopolitaine limitaient singulièrement les possibilités de créer des grands capitaux et des grandes entreprises. Et ce, sur le plus grand marché de l'empire, qui offrait le plus de possibilités et où la consommation pouvait jouer un rôle significatif dans l'accumulation du capital. Comme l'état garantissait une certaine sécurité pour tous les membres des métiers, il les retenait dans leurs activités et dans leurs ambitions. Dans une économie libre, il parvenait, par des contrôles, à les transformer en individus calmement installés dans la sécurité de leurs boutiques, un peu comme s'ils étaient des fonctionnaires, ou des « courtiers passifs ». Ils étaient le cas-type des marchands qui ne se déplaçaient pas. La puissance et l'aggressivité économiques étaient absentes.

Ainsi, dans les sources des 9e-11e siècles, lorsqu'on nous parle de personnes qui étaient extraordinairement riches, ce sont souvent des constantinopolitains, mais des hommes de l'administration, des collecteurs d'impôt avides de gain, surtout des fermiers du fisc, ou même des artistes, comme un chantre, Kténas[65]. Curieusement, il n'y a pas de marchands parmi les quelques grandes fortunes connues.

Et ceci me conduit à la conclusion du présent exposé. En regardant les choses de près, on constate que les marchands de la région économique de Constantinople et ceux des provinces fonctionnaient de deux façons tout à fait différentes. Les premiers étaient soumis aux *systèmata*, corps de métiers organisés par l'état dans le but de limi-

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(65) *De Administrando Imperio*, ch. 50, l. 236 et suiv.

ter et de réglementer leurs activités, de limiter tout excès, de prevenir toute concurrence illicite et de protéger le consommateur. Malgré ces limitations, ils faisaient des bons profits car ils tenaient boutique dans un des plus grands marchés de leur temps. L'équivalent n'existait pas dans les provinces, où l'économie de marché, une fois libérée des monopoles des fonctionnaires, se développa, à partir du milieu du 9e s., semble-t-il, en toute liberté, mais où les marchés étaient relativement petits. Ceci explique pourquoi le gouvernement impérial a cherché, par tous les moyens, à empêcher que les marchandises « prohibées » (tels les métaux précieux et la soie de haute qualité) ne quittent la zone économique de la capitale. Comme nous l'avons suggéré ci-dessus, l'exportation à partir des provinces ne pouvait pas être contrôlée.

Nous connaissons un seul cas où le gouvernement de Constantinople a essayé de réglementer les marchands des provinces: c'est la fameuse tentative d'étatisation du marché de blé de Raidestos sous le règne de Michel VII Doukas (1071-78). Au dire d'Attaleiate, il s'agissait initialement de l'endroit où arrivaient les cargaisons de blé et, comme dans une foire, s'opéraient les achats et les ventes. Mais lorsque le ministre Nikephoritzès essaya de concentrer toute la production dans le fameux *foundax* et de la faire gérer par l'état, il y a eu crise, peut-être renchérissement du blé, certainement révolte des commerçants, dont les intérêts étaient lésés et dont les affaires étaient bouleversées: d'ou la destruction du foundax à la première occasion[66].

L'éveil économique qui caractérise le 11e s. dans toute l'Europe, se manifeste aussi à Byzance, mais avec

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(66) Attaleiate, Bonn, 202-205; A propos des cette mesure de Michel VII voir LEMERLE, *Cinq études*, 301-302.

trois différences essentielles. Primo, l'économie byzantine ne s'était jamais complètement endormie, et par conséquent cet éveil apparaît comme une accélération plutôt que comme une chose nouvelle. Secondo, cette accélération avait commencé à Byzance sensiblement plus tôt qu'en Occident. Tertio, l'accélération se fit à Byzance dans le calme et, si j'ose dire, la sérénité. Curieusement, elle commença dans les provinces « desheritées » mais plus libres que Constantinople la privilégiée. Il a déjà été remarqué que durant cette période il y a eu un conflit idéologique exacerbé entre capitale et provinces, les habitants des dernières se plaignant continuellement du fait que les Constantinopolitains les exploitaient et les ignoraient[67]. Serait-ce le reflet d'un conflit entre deux systèmes économiques différents, celui réglementé et protégé par l'état, du grand marché de Constantinople, et celui, libre, des petits marchés des provinces? Les avantages objectifs de la Ville, assuraient encore au 11e s. la suprématie du premier. Mais l'avenir appartenait au second, le seul qui survivra le cataclysme de 1204.

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(67) HÉLÈNE AHRWEILER, *L'idéologie politique de l'empire byzantin*, Paris 1975, p. 87 et suiv.

XIII

THE ECONOMIC REGION OF CONSTANTINOPLE: FROM DIRECTED ECONOMY TO FREE ECONOMY, AND THE ROLE OF THE ITALIANS

Constantinople was the major Christian metropolis in the Middle Ages and its economic life had an impact that went well beyond the territory of the Byzantine empire. It was also influenced from the economic activities of all those who considered it as their economic center, above all the Italians, who had a privileged relationship with it for historical as well as pragmatic reasons.

Shortly after its foundation, Constantinople received its urban prefect or eparch, an official with special jurisdiction over the city and its immediate surroundings. In this, it followed the tradition of Rome, where the institution of the urban prefect had first appeared. But this institution was also modified when (and because) it was duplicated for the new capital in the East[1]. After the VII^th^ c., Constantinople was the capital and the only truly large city of the Empire, and, more importantly, the only vast consumption market[2]. Its provisioning was a problem, but it was also a major attraction for businessmen. And this market, owing as much to its size as to reasons of tradition, became the object of special regulations. It maintained and developed institutions which in the meantime had disappeared in the rest of the empire.

In the pages that follow, we shall try to evaluate some characteristics of Constantinople during the middle Byzantine period, from the IX^th^ c. and later.

As in Rome, the authority of the prefect of the Byzantine capital was supposed to extend 100 miles (148 km) from the center of the City. This 100 mile radius is still mentioned in the IX^th^[3], and again

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[1] G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale. Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (Paris 1974), pp. 226 ff.

[2] A much too pessimistic view of Constantinople during the « Dark Ages » in C. Mango, *Le développement urbain de Constantinople (IV^e^-VII^e^ s.)* (Paris 1985).

[3] *Eisagoge* (= *Epanagoge*), 4,4.

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in the XI^th^ c., and was known to have originated from Rome[4]; but the impression remains that this was a figure consecrated by tradition and did not correspond to reality: if it had really existed, this 148 km radius would have included within the region of Constantinople such important cities as Herakleia and even Adrianoupolis, which certainly belonged to the *thema* (province) of Thrace. What seems more probable, is that this region extended only to the Long Wall of Anastasius, which ran from the Propontis to the Black Sea approximately along the line Metrai/Çatalca-Derkos/Derkoz, at some two days' march from the City[5].

1. In his *De Thematibus* (ch. 1) Constantine Porphyrogennetos distinguishes between geographical Thrace, where Byzantium and Constantinople were founded, and the *thema* of Thrace, which was created later. When enumerating the cities that belonged to the *thema* of Thrace (following here the VI^th^ c. Synekdemos of Hierokles), he does not mention either Constantinople, or Silivria, presumably because these cities were not part of the *thema* but were instead part of the region of Constantinople.

2. The Arab geographers of the IX^th^ and X^th^ c., who provide descriptions of all the Byzantine provinces, speak of one province called Tafla or Talaya, which contained Constantinople and had its borders fixed at the Bosphorus (east), the Black Sea (north) the Long Wall (west) and the Sea of Marmara (south). As Pertusi has suggested, this name could be an Arabic rendering of the word *ta tagmata* or *ta allagia*, i.e. the region in which the imperial guard regiments were stationed — the region of Constantinople[6].

Moreover, the traffic of people and merchandise into and out of this region by sea was controlled at two checkpoints established by Justinian at the entrances of the two Straits, at Abydos on the Dardanelles and at Hieron on the Bosphorus. The formal importance of those controls was such that the term *abydos* eventually came also to mean a separate institution for maritime control and appears to have been used with this meaning elsewhere in the empire, especially in Thessalonica [7].

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[4] *Peira* of Eustathios Romaios, 51,9.

[5] R. Janin, *Constantinople byzantine* (Paris 1964), pp. 262-263.

[6] Costantino Porfirogenito, *De Thematibus*, ed. A. Pertusi (Vatican 1952), pp. 160-162; A. Pertusi, Il preteso tema bizantino di Talaya di Costantinopoli, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 49 (1956), pp. 85-95; H. Ahrweiler, *Recherches sur l'administration de l'empire byzantin aux IX^e^-XI^e^ s.*, (Athens-Paris 1960), pp. 31-32 (offprint from BCH 84); Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*, pp. 261-263.

What happened within the region of Constantinople? According to a IXth c. legal code, the *Eisagoge* or *Epanagoge*, the prefect of the City was all-powerful, superior to all officials, except the emperor, within the city limits (4,11); he inquired about all offenses committed within this region, but had no authority beyond it (4,4; 4,11). The same legal code describes some of the prefect's attributes which are known in detail from other sources: police, dispensation of justice, prisons, as well as control of the market, of the economic life and of the hippodrome games. He could condemn people to exile and confinement, but the emperor would choose the island where these sentences would be carried out (4,3); he could forbid specific Constantinopolitans from exercising a profession in the whole city or in parts of it (4,9). In short, the prefect exercised all powers inside the region of Constantinople, but most of these powers concerned the city-dwellers.

There is one clause to show how advantageous it was to be a permanent resident of the capital: if the prefect condemned a Constantinopolitan to exile, he had to imprison him there, without driving him away (4,9: *tes idias patridos me existan*). It is clear that being a Constantinopolitan was seen as a privileged status protected by law.

Access to the city was strictly regulated and restricted. A high official of the judiciary, the *koiaistor*, was, according to the *Eisagoge/ Epanagoge* (tit. 5), responsible for all visitors to the city, and especially for making sure that they finished their business quickly and left: he would question them, try to help them with their judicial problems, and send them back as soon as possible; in the case of large groups who might come for a trial, he was instructed to allow only two or three of them to represent the others in the tribunal and send the rest back home (5,2). Foreigners were accepted if they came to work. But beggars were obliged to work if they were in good physical condition (the sick and elderly could be authorized to stay in Constantinople to benefit from its charitable institutions): those beggars who came from the provinces were automatically sent back, while those from Constantinople were given work, but could be expelled if they refused to perform it (5,5). Severe punishment was reserved for those who refused to leave the City after their expulsion (5,10).

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[7] Cfr. N. Oikonomides, Le kommerkion d'Abydos, Thessalonique et le commerce bulgare du IXe s., in *Hommes et richesses*, edd. V. Kravari, J. Lefort, C. Morrisson, II (Paris 1991), pp. 241-248.

In this text it is clear that a distinction is made between native Constantinopolitans and all others, who were not welcome to stay in the City except if they had a job or needed to appear before the tribunal, and this for a time as limited as possible. Of course we know that these rules were not necessarily followed to the letter and that many foreigners, adventurers or not, come to find their fortune in the Byzantine capital starting with the well known case of Basil, the founder of the Macedonian dynasty. But the legislation tells us what the rules were supposed to be. And there is no reason to think that these rules were not, generally speaking, enforced.

In fact we can say with certainty that over a long period, special jurisdiction applied within Constantinople and its region. From the *Peira* (51,9) we learn taht the imperial legislation of the Xth c. concerning the acquisition of land by the " powerful " at the expense of the " poor " did not apply within the City limits, until Basil II abolished this special treatment and enforced the same legislation as in the rest of the empire. Although this does not mean that any other privilege of this region was also abolished, the fact still remains that with Basil II the special status of Constantinople received a (first?) blow; this was some time around the year 1000.

From another text, the Book of the Prefect (20, 1-2), we learn that restrictions applied as well to merchants who visited Constantinople, were they foreigners or Byzantines from the province: both were under the control of the same official, the *legatarios*; both were granted permission to stay three months, during which they had to finish their business and leave the City; both had to declare to the prefect any merchandise which they intended to export and obtain his approval. Neither had access to high quality silk (except for special arrangements) and, above all, both were strictly forbidden from acquiring slaves trained in silk production.

The Constantinopolitan businessmen, working under the principles of free economy but very much bound by regulations, were organized in *systemata* or *somateia*, professional organizations or " guilds ", within which all the members of one trade or craft were united under the leadership of a chief appointed by the State and called *exarchos* or *prostates*. These organizations descended directly from the late Roman *collegia* but they were now limited to Constantinole, and their statutes had become more liberal. The *somateia* included mainly the various crafts, whose members were furnishing " manual " work (such as dyers or tanners), while the *systemata* were made up of merchants (such as those of silk or silk garments), whose work was more speculative[8] — a distinction similar to the one that will appear later in Western Europe between the guilds of craftsmen and merchants[9]. Participation was not hereditary or compulsory, but admission was granted only to those who satisfied certain requirements. It has been proposed — but this is by no means certain — that even salaried workers of the imperial workshops were organized in *systemata*[10]. The members of these guilds had, as might be expected, their own social life and manifestations[11].

The Book of the Prefect describes in minute detail the controls to which the members of the Constantinopolitan " guilds " were submitted by the prefect and his personnel, especially the *symponos*[12], who was in charge of the market of the city: controls of weights and measures, locations of shops, acquisition of merchandise (often after being organized as a cartel), its quality, prices and profits, competition between members of the guild, extension of the business beyond the limits of one guild, and so on. All these controls had the obvious purpose of protecting the consumer; of protecting the guild members from unfair competition, mainly from their colleagues; and of guaranteeing adequate provisions for the capital city. In the process, the Constantinopolitan businessman gained in security but was also kept from becoming a full-scale capitalist. On the other hand, with time and with the general expansion that came with the XIth c. (if not earlier) he gained in political and social importance: in the second half of the XI^th^ c., guild members, previously excluded from all honorific titles, were for once been given such titles, and even became members of the senate; but this was to last only until the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) [13].

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[8] *Peira*, 51, 7.

[9] See the very informative article « guilds and métiers » by S. Epstein, in *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* 6, New York 1985, pp. 13-20 (with bibliography).

[10] A. Christophilopoulou, Systema Basilikon Istourgon, *Byzance, Hommage à André Stratos* I (Athens 1986), pp. 65-72. One should bear in mind, however, that private workers were provisioning the imperial service of the eidikon (Book of the Prefect 8, 2). — The same author questions the validity of the distinction between *systema* and *somateion*, with the argument that in other texts the two terms are used interchangeably. It is true that *systema* is in more common use than *somateion* and consequently could be used as a general term including all organized trades and crafts; but this would not mean that there was not a *stricto sensu* distinction between the two, as is attested by the *Peira* (51, 7).

[11] E. g. see A. Laiou, The Festival of « Agathe »: Comments on the Life of Constantinopolitan Women, *ibid.*, pp. 111-122.

[12] For the offices of the City see also V. Laurent, *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin* II (Paris 1981), nos. 993-1048 (prefect) and 1049-1087 (*symponos*).

On the other hand, the businessmen of Constantinople seem not to have ventured much beyond their city, at least not until the X^th^ c. Only with the XI^th^ c. do we find the first mentions of Constantinopolitan merchants who seem to have travelled abroad in order to import merchandise [14]. But our documentation is very scarce and we cannot say with certainty that this did not happen before. All we can say is that it is not attested, as far as we know.

In the early X^th^ c. Book of the Eparch, raw materials and other merchandise are constantly being described as " entering " Constantinople from outside (*exothen*) from the provinces (e. g. Strymon, Pontus, Kerasous, Chaldia, Trebizond, Seleukeia, Attaleia), as well as from foreign countries (Bulgaria, Russia, Italy, the Arab countries). The verb used in the text, *eiserchomai*, is the same used in the sources to describe an administrator's trip to the capital. The Constantinopolitan merchants are not expected to travel to seek merchandise and it sometimes is openly forbidden for them to undertake any such voyages. The impression is that the X^th^ c. businessman of Constantinople was comfortably installed in the largest market of the empire, received the imported merchandise, transformed it, if necessary, and sold it to those who came to him. He appears to have been a passive dealer, who did not move much, took no risks, and made a profit as a middleman, but who still had a good income because of the central geographical position and importance of the market in which he occupied one place [15]. But for all this security and inactivity, the Constantinopolitan businessman seems not to have succeeded (or even to have been interested) in becoming a truly full-scale capitalist. In fact, until the XII^th^ c., the few persons mentioned in the sources as being extremely wealthy were usually landowners, administrators, or even artists — but not businessmen.

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[13] P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XI^e^ siècle byzantin* (Paris 1977), pp. 287 ff.

[14] S. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society* I (University of California Press 1967), p. 42. In the XIth c. Greek merchants are attested throughout the Mediterranean. Cfr. A. Laiou, Byzantine Traders and Seafarers, in *The Greeks and the Sea*, ed. S. Vryonis (New York, 1993), pp. 79-96.

[15] I have analyzed this phaenomenon in: Les marchands qui voyagent, ceux qui ne voyagent pas, et la pénurie de textes géographiques byzantins, *Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et de Lettres de l'Université de Liège* (in press).

In contrast, the businessmen of the province functioned according to the principles of a free economy. They always acted freely and as individuals (or individual associations), without any imposed limitations; only some of them (and only when they traded in Constantinople) were obliged to appear as a cartel because they faced buyers who were themselves organized as a cartel. In the province, the State authorities ensured only that their trades and crafts were legitimate and nothing more [16]. There were no further controls and no professional organizations or guilds; and this stands in sharp contrast with what we know of Xth c. Constantinople [17]. Provincial merchants travelled a great deal for business, at home and abroad, as is amply attested in several Greek sources of the Xth-XIIth centuries.

Merchandise coming into Constantinople or exported therefrom was taxed at the control points of the Straits, more often in Abydos than in Hieron: this procedure, well known from late Roman times [18], is attested anew (with the name *kommerkion*) around the year 800 [19], and again in 992 [20]. Sailing through the Straits to or from Constantinople was an expensive proposition for all ships.

The problem of the Straits is highlighted in the few archival documents concerning ships. The first which come to mind are the privileges with tax exemptions that some monasteries, especially the Great Lavra on Mount Athos and the monastery of St. John the Theologian on the island of Patmos, obtained for their ships [21]. These were valid for " all imperial territories ", but in this general expression Constantinople was obviously not included. Isaakios Angelos (1185-1195) was the first emperor to grant to the ships of Patmos the special right of sailing once every year to Constantinople under the exemption. In all other trips to the capital, the monastic ships would be subject to regular taxation. It is obvious that the emperors, who were willing to accomodate the monasteries in their sales of agricultural surplus, were less eager to grant them privileges for the biggest consumption market of the empire, and thus tacitly encourage them to participate in the unbecoming speculative trade.

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[16] This is a traditional obligation of provincial governors, to allow only legitimate trades inside their provinces and forbid the illicit ones. It is repeated in the *Eisagoge/ Epanagoge* 6,6 and in the *Basilics* 6.1.40.4.

[17] See N. Oikonomides, Le marchand byzantin des provinces (IXe-XIe s.), *Mercati e Mercanti nell'alto Medioevo: l'area Euroasiatica e l'area Mediterranea* [Settimane di studio del CISAM 40] (Spoleto 1993), pp. 656 ff.

[18] J. Durliat and A. Guillou Le tarif d'Abydos (vers 492), *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellênique* 108 (1984), pp. 581 ff.

[19] Cfr. my remarks in Le Kommerkion d'Abydos, pp. 242-243.

[20] I. and P. Zepos, *Jus Graecoromanum* I (Athens 1931), pp. 260-261.

[21] *Actes d'Iviron*, ed. J. Lefort, N. Oikonomides, D. Papachryssanthou I (Paris 1985), no. 6; *Actes de Lavra*, ed. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos, D. Papachryssanthou (Paris 1970), nos. 55, 67, 68; *Eggrafa Patmou* I, ed. E. Vranoussi; II, ed. M. Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou (Athens 1980), nos. 8, 11, 56, 58, 59, 60.

What was the result of these limitations in practical terms? An answer can be found in the instructions left by an abbot of Patmos to his fellow monks when he was about to sail for official business to Constantinople (ca 1100). He instructed them to load all the Lenten cheese (i.e. the cheese that the monks did not eat during the Lenten fast, obviously a surplus) on the monastery's boat and send it for sale at the Straits (*ta Stena*, no doubt the entrance of the Dardanelles), where they were also to buy whatever the monastery might need. One member of the crew was to go to Constantinople to see if the abbot had concluded his business so that he might return to the monastery on his own ship [22]. It is clear that there was no question of the monastic ship sailing all the way to Constantinople, presumably because of the expenses that such a trip meant; it is also clear that traffic between Abydos and the capital was active and travel by individuals was easy in both directions.

More importantly, we have a change that occurred between the X^th^ and the turn of the XII^th^ c. This was the development of satellite markets just outside the city limits for those who wanted to sell relatively close, but without paying the duties and without the " red tape " that the services of the eparch of the City imposed [23]. These markets, unknown to the Book of the Prefect, are attested in the XI^th^ c. and afterwards. The Patmos document just analyzed shows clearly that such a satellite market had developed at the entrance of the Dardanelles, and was frequented both by merchants sailing to and from Constantinople, and by relatively small provincial producers who tried to sell their surplus in a more direct and cost effective way. The development of these satellite markets, for the obvious purpose of getting around the strict regulations of Constantinopolitan trade, shows that these regulations were still in existence but were no longer applied with the rigor prescribed in the Book of the Eparch.

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[22] Fr. Miklosich - J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca Medii Aevi* VI (Vienna 1890), p. 146.

[23] The phaenomenon is far from being uniquely Byzantine. Similar « secondary markets» avoiding the taxation of the city have been identified in Western Europe as well. See M. Mitterauer, *Zollfreiheit und Marktbereich* (Forschungen zur Landeskunde von Niederösterreich, 18, 1969), cfr. J. Heers, *Le clan familial au Moyen Age* (Paris 1974), p. 227.

Raidestos seems to have been another such satellite market. It is described by Attaleiates. Grain producers brought their surplus in carts, and Constantinopolitan and other merchants (whose purpose was obviously to provision the capital) bought directly from them, without any control from the authorities and in a general atmosphere of free market, as they tried to obtain lower prices by benefitting from the competition between sellers. All kinds of other agricultural produce was also sold there directly by the farmers. We can assume that this was unfair to other merchants of the City, who were subject to the traditional controls of the eparch. In any case, we know that at the instigation of the minister Nikephoritzes, the State, under emperor Michael VII Doukas (1071-1078), created the famous *phoundax*, and institution that would concentrate and eventually monopolize the grain in Raidestos — and nowhere else in the empire — obviously to control provisioning of Constantinople. But this provoked a crisis, those who had the monopoly sought unreasonably high profits, prices went out of control. At the end, the *phoundax* was destroyed by the angry grain producers and the governmental measures were abolished [24].

The story of the *phoundax* has been discussed by several scholars and various interpretations have been proposed. It seems to me that we have here an attempt by the state to impose the stringent rules applying to grain imported to the City from elsewhere on the provincial market of Raidestos. But this shocked the producers and tradesmen of the province, who panicked. The ensuing crisis and the repeal of the measure proved only one thing, that it was no longer possible to impose restrictions on the free trade of the provincial merchants, and that if changes were to be made, they had to be made for the purpose of lifting the restrictions governing the economic life of Constantinople.

We have no reliable information concerning the size of business in the Byzantine capital — or in the Byzantine empire for that matter. I can quote only three very imprecise texts for the Xth century:

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[24] Michael Attaleiates, Bonn, pp. 202-205; cfr. Lemerle, *Cinq études*, pp. 301-302.

1. The emperor Romanos Lakapenos " paid all the debts of the Constantinopolitans, rich, aristocrats, poor of lowly " which amounted to 1900 pounds of gold, in other words 136.800 nomismata, and burned the receipts in public[25]. The figure may be exaggerated, as the historian who reports this anecdote wishes to praise this imperial initiative, but if examined more closely it seems rather small to us. If we read the text to the letter, we must admit that a part of these debts would correspond to investment loans, or loans contracted by businessmen in hope of profit, while another part would correspond to consumption loans, contracted by individuals in need of cash. The reported amount of the outstanding debts at a given moment seems incredibly small for a large city like Constantinople. Of course we may suppose that investment loans were not included in this measure (which would seem logical, because paying off debts that were themselves generating profits would not make much sense). But this remains a hypothesis, not supported by our unique source.

2. From the list of salaries paid to the *strategoi* in the time of emperor Leo VI (ca 911-912), we learn that two of these provincial commanders, who should normally receive a total salary of 20 pounds a year each, also received some money from the *kommerkion* (sales tax) of their province: the strategos of Chaldia received only ten pounds in salary because he received another ten from the *kommerkion*, while the strategos of Mesopotamia did not receive any salary because he collected all the *kommerkion*[26]. Obviously the *kommerkion* of Mesopotamia did not yield more than twenty pounds a year, while that of Chaldia was approximately half of it. The figures are again surprisingly small, since if one reckons the *kommerkion* at 10%, it would mean that all merchandise going through Chaldia and Mesopotamia each year would have a total value of approximately 7.200 or 14.400 nomismata respectively. But Chaldia and Mesopotamia were the terminals of two major highways leading from Persia to Asia Minor, and thence to the west. Should we understand that ths *kommerkion* affected the merchandise consumed locally, while that destined

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[25] Theophanes Continuatus, Bonn, p. 429.

[26] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Cerimoniis aulae byzantinae*, Bonn, p. 697. The *strategos* of Mesopotamia had from the IXth c. a seal similar to the ones of *kommerkiarioi*; cfr. W. Brandes, Überlegungen zur Vorgeschichte der Thema Mesopotamien, *Byzantinoslavica* 44/2 (1983), pp. 171-177.

for Constantinople was taxed upon arrival to the city? Here again, nothing is certain [27].

3. The Russian merchants came to Xth c. Constantinople in large numbers [28]. We know that they had to defend themselves from the Petchnegs all along the Dniepr and that, in the eyes of the Byzantines, they often presented the appearance of a raiding party, if not an invading army. They were supposed to enter the City unarmed, in groups of fifty, under the watch of an imperial official. On the other hand, we know that each one of them had the right to export silks not worth more than fifty gold coins. Thus, each group of fifty merchants would mean a total business in silk for the Constantinopolitan merchants worth 2500 gold coins. Of course we cannot say what the average number of these Russian merchants was every year, and so we are left once again in uncertainty.

The figures that I mentioned are few, fragmentary and, above all, uncertain. But all three seem to invite us to downgrade rather than upgrade the economic importance of international trade for Xth c. Byzantium. Most probably, the situation changed later. In the XIth c. Byzantium first went through geographic and economic expansion; then came the political and military disasters marked by the year 1071 and the loss of Asia Minor to the Turks and Southern Italy to the Normans. But economic expansion continued in the XIth and XIIth c. The economic life of the Byzantine capital flourished. Only an increase of the economic activities in Constantinople could explain the sudden social rise of the members of the guilds in the XIth c. And it may be that this economic life flourished even more with the arrival en masse (was it because of the arrival?) of Western merchants to Constantinople. Their presence may at first have been beneficial, before they generated too much competition for their Byzantine counterparts [29].

The Constantinopolitan " guilds " are still attested in the XIth and in the XIIth century with the same names and officials as in the

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[27] A Xth century Arab author states that the yearly *kommerkion* of Trebizond amounted to 1.000 litrai, but this can as well be an exaggeration (A. Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire, 900-1200* [Cambridge 1989], p. 213).

[28] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, ed. Moravcsik-Jenkins, ch. 9; I. Sorlin, Les traités de Byzance avec la Russie au X^e siècle, *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, 2 (1961), pp. 313-360, 447-475.

[29] Modern historians have stressed the positive influence that the massive arrival of western merchants may have had on the Byzantine economy; see M. Hendy, *Studies in Byzantine Monetary Economy, 300-1453* (Cambridge 1985), pp. 590-602; Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, p. 224.

X^{th}. This we can say on the basis of the existing evidence: about the year 1048 Constantine Monomachos legislated on the organized notaries and lawyers [30]; Kekaumenos considered the *systemata* as an important source of information about events in the City [31]; Alexios Komnenos stressed the socially inferior status that they traditionally held in comparison to the landowning aristocracy [32]. In his description of revolts in Constantinople, Niketas Choniates shows how the populace regrouped around the " arts " (*technai*), how they were organized in *syllogoi* and *systemata*, and how the men of the market (*agoraioi*) mobilized in factions (*fatriai*) in order to defend one of their own (*homotechnon*) who was oppressed by the administration [33]. By the end of the XII^{th} century, Theodore Balsamon still condemned the clerics who became *systematikoi*, such as money changers, or merchants of silk garments, or wine merchants [34]. So the institution was alive and well and suffered from the same social discrimination as in the time of the Book of the Prefect.

But we can say that some substantial changes had occurred, on the basis of further and more eloquent texts from the XII^{th} c. From the commentaries of Balsamon, we learn that the lawyers, who had once been members of a *systema* headed by a *primikerios* and received fees regulated by the State [35], had become a « free profession » (*eleutherion spoudasma*), accessible to clerics, before the mid-XII^{th} c. [36]. From a *prostagma* of Manuel I Komnenos (1151 or 1166), we also learn that the stands of money changers (*trapezotopia*) could be bought freely, and their owner could work them himself, even if he was a cleric — an act which was forbidden by church law. To avoid scandal, the emperor asked the owners to find other worthy people to perform this task, and promised that the approval of the prefect of the city would be forthcoming [37].

An important innovation in the above texts is the notion of " free profession ". The classical principle, according to which men of any importance had to belong to *axiai*, *strateiai*, or *systemata* [38], obviously no longer corresponded with reality. An *axia* was a title or high administrative office bestowed upon an individual by the emperor, and was usually accompanied by a salary; a *strateia* was a position in the administration or the military which one might acquire and keep for life, drawing whatever revenues it provided; a *systema* was a state-organized profession of Constantinople. But the *eleutherion spoudasma*, a non-regulated, free profession seeking its remuneration directly from those who required its services without intervention or control from the authorities, is a novelty, lying outside this framework and showing how substantially Byzantine society, and in particular the society of Constantinople, had changed between the Xth and the XIIth c. It is worth remembering here that in Western Europe [39] the same distinction existed between the " free crafts " or " métiers " and the " sworn corporations ", the real guilds: both were professional organizations, but the latter were more formal, more rigid, and had greater political influence.

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[30] Zepos, *Jus*, p. 620.

[31] Kekaumenos, ed. Litavrin, p. 122; cfr. Christophilopoulou, Systema, pp. 71-72.

[32] Zepos, *Jus*, p. 645.

[33] Niketas Choniates ed. Van Dieten, pp. 234, 524-525.

[34] G. Rhalles and M. Potles, *Syntagma ton theion kai hieron kanonon*, IV (Athens 1854), p. 469.

[35] In the *Peira* (10, 1 and 2), written close to the mid-eleventh century, the fees of the lawyers are said to be subject of government restrictions.

[36] Rhalles-Potles, *Syntagma*, I, p. 160.

[37] Rhalles-Potles, *Syntagma*, IV, p. 469.

There is a second point to be made which illustrates the notion of freedom as understood in the context of XIIth c. Constantinople. According to the Book of the Prefect (3,1), if an individual wanted to become a banker, he had first to produce (at the *systema*) reliable testimony to the effect that he was honest and law-abiding, whereupon he could be appointed to a banker's position by the prefect. In the XIIth c., matters seems to have changed considerably. The individual with sufficient means first bought freely the (physical) position of a bank in the market (*trapezotopion*) — obviously the number and placement of such positions, where one could install a table and do business, was limited and subject to controls, but they could change hands without any apparent restrictions — as though he were buying real estate; then he worked as a banker himself or could transfer his position to a person of his choice, hopefully an appropriate person, as the emperor said. It was still necessary to obtain the approval of the prefect of the city. But there was no longer any question of testimony or of the guild's authorities, since it was as though the profession of banking could be undertaken by anyone who had the means and possessed a *trapezotopion*: he needed only to obtain the approval of the eparch. The notion of a " free profession " had obviously crept into the banking business, and had transformed a controlled and regulated venture into a free and very " liberal " enterprise.

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[38] See *Basilics* 1.1.32 (Zepos ed.); *Procheiros Nomos* 39, 28. In the *Eisagoge/Epanagoge* (14,1) *axia* and *strateia* are mentioned together with *epitedeuma* (profession).

[39] Cfr. Epstein, *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (note 9 above).

It is obvious that until 1204 the *systemata* of Constantinople had undergone some changes, becoming less strict and more liberal, but remained subordinate to the prefect's authority, as had been the case in the X^th^ and in the XI^th^ century [40].

This liberalization may have started with the expansion of the XI^th^ c., but must also, I suppose, have been related to the arrival in force of privileged Western merchants in Constantinople, especially after the Venetians obtained their well known privileges from Alexios I Komnenos: their permanent installation in Constantinople, trade in all the empire (except for the Black Sea), and complete exemption from taxes. Later came the Pisans and the Genoese, with lesser but still substantial privileges. They all functioned in complete freedom, and their example may have influenced some Constantinopolitan practices.

The arrival of the privileged Italians could not but kill what may have survived of the over-controls stipulated in the Book of the Prefect. From the moment that they came to Constantinople, functioning with complete liberty and protection by the authorities — not to speak of the special treatment that they received in the matter of taxes —, the restraints upon the Byzantines were no longer applicable in reality. The market of the Byzantine capital had by then to be liberated.

Many orators of the XII^th^ c. speak of the great influx of foreigners, merchants, and merchandise, into Constantinople [41]. Niketas Choniates describes how merchants from the East and from the West, Georgians and Italians, arrived in Constantinople in such numbers that the emperor would recruit mercenaries among them [42]. This was the main privilege remaining to members of the Byzantine *systemata*, the fact that their merchandise was in demand from both sides, east and west: Constantinople still remained the destination for all western and eastern merchants, who came by ship and were not allowed to sail beyond. Constantinople remained an obligatory market for its visitors.

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[40] *Peira* 51, 29.

[41] E. g. W. Regel, *Fontes Rerum Byzantinarum*, II (Petropoli 1918), p. 305.

[42] Niketas Choniates, p. 233.

The Byzantine merchants may have suffered from western competition (hence their anti-Latin riots) but they also seem to have made good profits, for most of the XIIth c. at least, benefitting largely from the increased vitality brought to their market by the newcomers.

Towards the end of the XIIth c., we find the first information about a very wealthy Byzantine who was in the business of banking and of trade, and who was undoubtedly in a position to face any competition from his western — and non western — colleagues. A certain Kalomodios [43] was so wealthy that the administration attempted (with no success because of the solidarity of his colleagues) to imprison him and to confiscate his property. He was a banker who accumulated a vast fortune through successful operations in long-distance trade (*ekdemias kat'emporian pollakis steilamenos*). The text is clear: Kalomodios did not travel himself but financed commercial trips undertaken by others. This immediately calls to mind the well known business association for long-distance trade of the Middle Ages known as *commenda* in the west or, if more complicated, *societas maris*, which corresponds to (and may have its origins in) the Byzantine *chreokoinonia* [44]. We know that in the XIIth c. long-distance trade, could be very lucrative, if successful [45]. And Kalomodios obviously profitted from the situation.

We may be sure that Kalomodios was not the first Byzantine to engage in such activities. They must have been common among the businessmen of Constantinople for quite some time before the end of ther XIIth c.: my guess would be that they began to develop with the expansion of the XIth c., when the eparch's controls were challenged and circumvented by the Byzantines themselves [46], and that this evolution was hastened by the arrival of the Italians in Constantinople. The structure of Constantinopolitan trade was transformed between the Xth and the XIIth c.

Then came 1204. Constantinople fell to the Crusaders. The special status of its region seems to have disappeared. The only text showing that the immediate surroundings of the City may have maintained some special status after 1204, comes from Pachymeres who speaks of the farmers that lived in the immediate surroundings of the City in 1261. They were called the *thelematarioi*; they were Greek but had the confidence of the Latins of Constantinople, and finally delivered the city to the army of Alexios Strategopoulos[47]. But in my view, this seems to reflect an *ad hoc* arrangement of the Crusaders and has nothing to do with the traditional privileges of the New Rome.

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[43] Niketas Choniates, pp. 523-524.

[44] Cfr. J. H. Pryor, The Origins of the Commenda Contract, *Speculum* 52 (1977), pp. 5-37.

[45] *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, 2 (Cambridge 1952), p. 306 (an example form mid-XIIth c. Genova).

[46] Abolition of special privileges of the region by Basil I; early mentions of Constantinopolitan merchants travelling abroad; distribution of titles to members of the guilds in the second half of the XIth c.; appearance of satellite « free » markets and resistance to the imposition of controls over them (the Raidestos affair).

The Straits became open to the westerners, who could provision themselves directly from the ports of the Black Sea. Constantinople (and Genoese Galata, for that matter) kept its importance even after its return to Byzantine hands, but it was now a stop on a much longer itinerary for the large Italian convoys of the eastern trade; an important stop, no doubt, probably the most important of all, but, now, one stop among others. The small-scale Black Sea trade was of course connected to the large market of Constantinople/Galata, where it joined the international circuit, adding to the importance of the city. But competition had become stiff in this late period. Other Byzantine cities, above all Thessalonica (probably starting with the XIth c.), had also gained in importance as political and economic centers and became major consumption markets, with their own important arts and crafts (including, for the first time, some organization of free trades)[48], and with their own flourishing Italian colonies.

The businessmen of the Palaiologan period functioned according to the principles of a free economy, almost fully assimilated with their Italian colleagues in Romania, with whom they collaborated closely, and to whom they were more and more economically subordinated[49].

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[47] Georges Pachymérès, *Relations Historiques*, ed. A. Failler - V. Laurent, I (Paris 1984), pp. 157, 193.

[48] A deed of sale of the year 1097 is witnessed im Thessalonica by a *protos ton kamelaukadon*, who seems to be the head of a free trade grouping the craftsmen fabricating the hats called *kamelaukia*. *Actes de Lavra*, ed. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos, D. Papachryssanthou, I (Paris 1970), no. 53, l. 39.

[49] For what follows, see: K.-P. Matschke, *Fortschritt und Reaktion im Byzanz im 14 Jh.* (Berlin 1971); N. Oikonomides, *Hommes d'affaires Grecs et Latins à Constantinople (XIII^e^-XV^e^ s.)* (Montreal-Paris 1979); A. Laïou-Thomadakis, The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System; Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 34-35 (1982), pp. 177-222; same author, The Greek Merchant of the Palaeologan Period: a Collective Portrait, *Praktika* of the Academy of Athens, 57 (1982), pp. 96-132; and important new sources that await being exploited by historians: P. Schreiner, *Texte zur spätbyzantinischen Finanz- und Wirtschafts-*

The city authorities did not control them any longer — the eparch in the XIVth c. was simply an honorific title, having nothing to do with the economic life of the City [50]. Constantinople was divided into many administrative districts resembling separate villages, as each one had its own administration headed by a *demarchos*. In the capital, the authorities resided in the palace; in the other cities, in the governor's house. In my opinion, many crafts were organized in guilds which had nothing in common with the *systemata* of the Xth c., except perhaps for some traditional terms that survived. The Palaiologan guilds seem to have been independent from the State authorities, and were interested mainly in promoting the members' interests and not in serving the State's. They appear to have existed not only in Constantinople, but also in Thessalonica, and presumably in other major cities [51].

By way of summary, medieval Constantinople and its well defined region maintained a special status at least until the XIth c.; within this region, special jurisdiction was applied, the economy was submitted

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geschichte in Handschriften der Biblioteca Vaticana (Vatican 1991) [Studi e Testi, no. 344].

[50] R. Guilland, Études sur l'histoire administrative de l'empire byzantin. L'éparque, *Byzantinoslavica*, 41 (1980), pp. 17-32, 145-80, with corrections by J.-Cl. Cheynet, *Byzantinoslavica*, 45 (1984), pp. 50-54.

[51] This point of view has been contested by Lj. Maksimović, Charakter der sozialwirtschaftlichen Struktur der spätbyzantinischen Stadt (13.-15. Jh.), *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 31/1 (1981), pp. 149-188. I am not convinced by his argumentation because I believe that the terminology found in the documents, if not twisted, shows clearly that some kind of professional organizations existed in Constantinople and Thessalonica. (*a*) We have the *exarchoi* of the notaries (*taboullarioi*) and of the perfume dealers (*myrepsoi*); as the term *exarchos* is traditionally related to the guild organization, I cannot see why one should consider them as some kind of « commanders »; exactly what might a commander of the perfume dealers be? (*b*) The same can be said about the *protomakellarios* (the first butcher), whom I considered to be a guild leader; this point of view has been dismissed because we know of a *protomakellarios* dealing in wool. But how could one exercise any authority over the butchers, being a butcher himself, if not through some kind of professional association? Dealing in materials other than the main ones of the guild is rather commonly attested in western european guilds. (*c*) We are told by the sources that the port workers and sailors of Thessalonica had in the XIVth c. « their own authority » (*idian archen*); this could only be a professional organization, as it is defined as belonging to the workers (*idian*) and not as a special command depending from the imperial authorities; thus once again this must have been a professional organization. (*d*) It is true that the *protomaïstores* of the builders (*dometoron*) and the heads of the saltpan workers (*protalykarioi*) could as well be leaders of guilds or leaders of teams of workers, but I am really wondering to what point the difference between the two was significant in the context of relatively small cities.

to controls, and the professions were organized in corporations descending directly from the Roman *collegia* (which survived only in the capital), but were more liberal than these; the importance of the market guaranteed business and profits, which were limited only by regulations. On the contrary, the provinces enjoyed a free economic system but suffered from the limited scope of their small markets; provincial businessmen relied largely upon trade with Constantinople.

With the expansion of the XIth c., conditions began to change in Constantinople; its " special " character disappears as does the regulation of economic life. The Constantinopolitan merchants of the XIIth c. turn to more profitable enterprises, such as long distance trade, and accumulate much capital; they still enjoy and profit from the advantage provided to them by the geographical situation of the city and by the limitations imposed upon the circulation of foreign merchants at sea beyond Constantinople, either way. The professional organizations become more and more liberal. In the provinces, the expansion is felt but the general system does not change, except in that the provincials try now to obtain a more direct share of the Constantinopolitan market.

With 1204, Byzantine business fell into a secondary position, dependent upon the Italian. Complete freedom in economic life is instituted everywhere and professional corporations, similar to the western free crafts or métiers, appear in the cities. The economic region of Constantinople no longer existed.

XIV

ΣΕ ΠΟΙΟ ΒΑΘΜΟ ΗΤΑΝ ΕΚΧΡΗΜΑΤΙΣΜΕΝΗ Η ΜΕΣΟΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΗ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΑ;

Το τριμεταλλικό νομισματικό σύστημα του Βυζαντίου, δημιούργημα του Μεγάλου Κωνσταντίνου, διατήρησε ουσιαστικά αναλλοίωτα τα κύρια χαρακτηριστικά του μέχρι τον 11ο αιώνα. Ο χρυσός solidus παρέμεινε το σταθερότερο χρυσό νόμισμα στον Μεσαιωνικό κόσμο. Οι υποδιαιρέσεις του (12 αργυρά μιλιαρήσια, το καθένα από τα οποία αντιστοιχούσε σε 24 χάλκινες φόλλεις) έμειναν επίσης σταθερές. Τα νομίσματα αυτά υπήρξαν τα κύρια εργαλεία χάρη στα οποία λειτουργούσε η Βυζαντινή οικονομία, ιδιαίτερα η δημόσια οικονομία, από την βασιλεία του Αναστασίου (491-518) και κατόπι.

Το κράτος έβαζε σε κυκλοφορία χρήματα με μορφή μισθών και τα έπαιρνε πίσω με τη μορφή φόρων, προσπαθώντας πάντοτε να συγκεντρώσει στα ταμεία του όσο το δυνατό περισσότερα χρυσά νομίσματα. Καμμιά φορά παρουσιαζόταν στενότητα ρευστού. Κρίση δημιουργήθηκε φαίνεται όταν, το 769, ο Κωνσταντίνος Ε' απαίτησε την πληρωμή του έγγειου φόρου σε χρυσάφι· οι αγρότες υπέφεραν επειδή αναγκάσθηκαν να πουλήσουν τα προϊόντα τους όσο όσο, ενώ οι τιμές των προϊόντων αυτών στην Κωνσταντινούπολη σημείωναν μια θεαματική πτώση. Από την εποχή αυτή και κατόπι, ο βασικός φόρος στο Βυζάντιο πληρωνόταν πάντοτε σε χρυσό, ακολουθώντας το σύστημα του *χαράγματος*. Κατά τα φαινόμενα η δημόσια οικονομία είχε εκχρηματισθεί πλήρως[1].

Τα συμβάντα του 769 μαρτυρούν αναμφισβήτητα ότι δεν ήταν τότε εύκολο για τους χωρικούς να βρουν χρυσά νομίσματα. Ανάλογα φαινόμενα παρουσιάσθηκαν άλλωστε και αργότερα. Η επανάσταση των Βουλγάρων του 1040-41 είχε ως αιτία την απόπειρα της Βυζαντινής κυβέρνησης να τους επιβάλει το φορολογικό σύστημα της υπόλοιπης αυτοκρατορίας και να απαιτήσει φορολογία σε χρήμα και όχι πια σε είδος, όπως πλήρωναν από τα παλιά χρόνια του Βουλγαρικού κράτους. Η περίπτωση όμως αυτή αναφέρεται σε μια περιοχή που είχε πρόσφατα προσαρτηθεί στο Βυζάντιο και συνεπώς παρουσίαζε ιδιαιτερότητες. Εξ άλλου από τον Παχυμέρη μαθαίνουμε ότι τον 13ο αιώνα οι χωρικοί της Βορειοδυτικής Μικράς Ασίας υπέφεραν επειδή ο Μιχαήλ Παλαιολόγος απαίτησε την πληρωμή όλων των φόρων σε νομίσματα. Και στην περί-

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[1] Τα μέτρα του Κωνσταντίνου Ε' περιγράφονται στα Χρονικά του πατριάρχη Νικηφόρου και του Θεοφάνη. Την παραπάνω ερμηνεία έχω ήδη προτείνει: De l'impôt de distribution à l'impôt de quotité: à propos du premier cadastre byzantin (7e-9e siècle), *Zbornik Radova* 26 (1987) 10. Ότι το σύστημα του χαράγματος πρέπει να δημιουργήθηκε κατά τον 8ο αιώνα προτείνει για άλλους λόγους και ο M. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy*, Cambridge 1985, 288.

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πτωση αυτή πρόκειται για δυσκολίες τοπικού χαρακτήρα σχετιζόμενες με μια ειδική συγκυρία.

Με βάση τις παραπάνω μεμονωμένες περιπτώσεις εκφράσθηκε η άποψη ότι ο βαθμός εκχρηματισμού της Βυζαντινής οικονομίας ήταν κατά περιοχές πολύ χαμηλός· και ότι η Βυζαντινή οικονομία ήταν πιθανώς λιγώτερο εκχρηματισμένη από την Αγγλοσαξωνική[2]. Αναρωτιέται όμως κανείς: όταν οι Βυζαντινοί μιλούν για πληρωμές ή μισθούς που καταβάλλονται σε νομίσματα, πρέπει άραγε να υποπτευόμαστε ότι τα νομίσματα ήταν απλές μονάδες υπολογισμού και ότι οι πραγματικές πληρωμές γίνονταν σε είδος; Νομίζω όχι. Τα έγγραφα που σώζονται προσδιορίζουν αν η καταβολή ενός ποσού έγινε με μέσον άλλο από εκείνο που αναφέρεται στο έγγραφο[3], ακόμη και όταν το μέσο αυτό ήταν ένα διαφορετικό νόμισμα[4]. Γιατί να αμφισβητήσουμε την μαρτυρία τους;

Σε κάθε συζήτηση για τον βαθμό εκχρηματισμού της Βυζαντινής οικονομίας, οι πηγές που μιλούν για πληρωμές σε νομίσματα πρέπει να θεωρηθούν εξ ίσου αξιόπιστες με εκείνες που δείχνουν ότι μια ορισμένη στιγμή και σε μια ορισμένη περιοχή παρουσιάστηκε έλλειψη ρευστού. Επιπλέον, θα μπορούσε κανείς να κάμει διάκριση ανάμεσα στην βυζαντινή οικονομία πριν από την κρίση του 11ου αιώνα και μετά από αυτήν. Για τον λόγο αυτό, η παρούσα μελέτη θα επικεντρωθεί σε κείμενα που χρονολογούνται από τον 8ο ως τον 11ο αιώνα, από την γενίκευση της φορολογίας σε χρήμα επί Κωνσταντίνου Ε΄ (η οποία δεν μπορούσε παρά να έρθει ως επακόλουθο της ευρείας κυκλοφορίας και χρήσης του νομίσματος ως μέσου ανταλλαγής και στις επαρχίες) μέχρι την κατάρρευση του νομισματικού συστήματος επί Νικηφόρου Βοτανειάτη (1078-1081).

Το ερώτημα το οποίο θα θέσω, είναι κατά πόσον τα νομίσματα χρησιμοποιούνταν καθημερινά και σε ευρεία κλίμακα από τον μέσο Βυζαντινό. Δεν θα χρησιμοποιήσω κείμενα νομικού ή δημοσιονομικού χαρακτήρα, για τα οποία θα μπορούσε να λεχθεί πως τα νομίσματα είναι μονάδες υπολογισμού[5], και θα περιορισθώ σε ένα είδος αφηγηματικών πηγών, οι οποίες περιγράφουν με ακρίβεια και χωρίς αξιώσεις την καθημερινή ζωή: τους Βίους αγίων. Αφήνοντας κατά μέρος τις αυτοκρατορικές δωρεές, που δεν έχουν ενδιαφέρον για την έρευνά μας, θα ασχοληθώ με χωρία που αναφέρονται σε χρησιμοποίηση νομισμάτων και ιδιαίτερα στα χωρία που περιγράφουν δοσοληψίες σε ορισμένο χώρο και χρόνο· πώς γίνονταν οι δοσοληψίες αυτές, με μετρητά ή με ανταλλαγές σε είδος;

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[2] Hendy, *ό.π.*, 297 κεξ. (με αναφορά στις σχετικές πηγές). Το πρόβλημα είχε παλιότερα τεθεί από τον A. P. Každan, Iz ekonomičeskoj žizni Vizantii XI-XII vv., *Vizantijskie Očerki* 2, Μόσχα 1971, 200 που βασιζόταν κυρίως σε πηγές του 12ου αιώνα. Για μια θεώρηση του θέματος πολύ πλησιέστερη σε ό,τι κατά την γνώμη μου ήταν η πραγματικότητα, βλ. το πρόσφατο και πολύ αξιόλογο βιβλίο του A. Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire 900-1200*, Cambridge 1989.

[3] Παράδειγμα: ο πρωτοβεστιάριος Γεώργιος Ευνούχος αγόρασε πολλά κτήματα το 1212-13 στην περιοχή της Μιλήτου· τις πιο πολλές φορές πλήρωσε σε μετρητά, σε μερικές όμως περιπτώσεις προσδιορίζεται στα έγγραφα ότι η πληρωμή έγινε εν όλω ή εν μέρει σε είδος (Fr. Miklosich - J. Müller, *Acta et Diplomata* VI, 156-165). Δεν υπάρχει κανείς λόγος για να υποπτευθεί κανείς ότι η πληρωμή σε είδος έγινε και σε αγοραπωλησίες άλλες από εκείνες στις οποίες ρητά αναφέρεται. Ένα άλλο μεταγενέστερο έγγραφο (*ο.π.*, 230-31) αναφέρει πώληση χωραφίου που έγινε *εἰς βοΐδιον καματηρὸν ἀρεστὸν ἕν, εἰς ὑπέρπυρα τρία καὶ μοχθηρὸν ἕν.* Είναι προφανές ότι η τιμή απετελείτο από τρία στοιχεία· ένα βόδι για καλλιέργεια που θα άρεσε στον αντισυμβαλλόμενο, ένα γουρούνι (*μοχθηρόν = μουχτερό*, βλ. Φ. Κουκουλέ, *Βυζαντινῶν Βίος καὶ Πολιτισμός* 5, Αθήνα 1952, 53) καί τρία υπέρπυρα. Συνεπώς η σχετική υπόθεση του M. Angold (*A Byzantine Government in Exile*, Οξφόρδη 1975, 107, σημ. 90) δεν χρειάζεται.

[4] Π.χ. *ὑπέρπυρα διὰ δουκάτων βενετικῶν: Actes de Docheiariou*, ed. N. Oikonomidès, Παρίσι 1984, αρ. 42, στ. 40· πρβλ. και αρ. 36, στ. 12.

8ος αιώνας

1. Ο Θεοφάνης ο ομολογητής δανείσθηκε 2½ λίτρες χρυσού για να ιδρύσει την μονή της Σιγριανής[6].

2. Μοναχοί που ζουν στην ευρύτερη περιοχή της Κωνσταντινούπολης, δέχονται μικρότερες δωρεές *χρυσίου*, ένα ή περισσότερα νομίσματα, και καμμιά φορά τα μοιράζουν στους φτωχούς[7].

3. Στο πτωχοτροφείο που ίδρυσε στην Κωνσταντινούπολη ο πατριάρχης Ταράσιος, *αργύριον* διανέμεται στους φτωχούς[8].

4. Στην Κωνσταντινούπολη η ελεημοσύνη γίνεται με μετρητά. Στην Παφλαγονία όμως ένας χωρικός, που έπεσε σε δυστυχία γιατί είχε χρέη και έπρεπε να πληρώσει τους φόρους του σε περίοδο σιτοδείας εξαναγκάσθηκε να συνάψει και δάνεια εις είδος (έξι μοδίους σιτάρι και ένα ψωμί)[9].

9ος αιώνας

Δωρεές προς μοναχούς και ελεημοσύνη σε φτωχούς γίνονται με χρυσά νομίσματα:

5. Στην Λακεδαίμονα,[10]
6. Στο Ρήγιον της Καλαβρίας,[11]
7. Στην Βιζύη της Θράκης,[12]

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[5] Παρά ταύτα θα πρέπει να υπογραμμισθεί ότι στα κείμενα αυτά αναφέρεται ολοκάθαρα ότι οι κύριοι φόροι πληρώνονταν πάντα με νομίσματα, κυρίως χρυσά, και ότι μόνο δευτερεύουσες δημοσιονομικές επιβαρύνσεις προσφέρονταν σε είδος ή υπό μορφή προσωπικής εργασίας·άλλωστε και γι' αυτές προβλεπόταν η μετατροπή τους σε χρηματικές καταβολές (adaeratio) κυρίως τον 11ο αιώνα. Ο καλλιτέχνης που θέλησε να απεικονίσει ένα φοροεισπράκτορα, τον παρουσίασε μπρος σε ένα τραπέζι, πάνω στο οποίο βρίσκονται τακτοποιημένα σε στήλες μόνο νομίσματα: Cod. Sinaiticus gr. 339, 6λ. A. Guillou, *La Civilisation byzantine*, Παρίσι 1974, 144, εικ. 37.

[6] B. Latyšev, Methodii partiarchae CP, Vita S. Theophanis, *Mémoires de l'Académie de Russie*, 8η σειρά, 13/4 (1918) 17.

[7] Migne, PG 100, 1105-8, 1125, 1156, 1159-60.

[8] I. A. Heikel, Ignatii Diaconi Vita Tarasii archiep. CP, *Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae* 17 (1891) 402.

[9] *Byzantion* 9 (1934) 119, 131, 133, 149.

[10] *Θεολογία* 27 (1956) 583.

[11] F. Dvornik, *La Vie de Saint Grégoire le Décapolite et les Slaves macédoniens au IXe siècle*, Παρίσι 1926, 55.

[12] *Acta Sanctorum*, Νοέμβριος IV, 697.

8. Στην Κωνσταντινούπολη[13] και

9. Στον Όλυμπο της Βιθυνίας[14].

10. Στην Αττάλεια αντίθετα έχουμε μια περίπτωση ελεημοσύνης εις είδος (μόδιοι σίτου) ενώ στο ίδιο μέρος το φιλοδώρημα ενός αγγελιοφόρου καταβάλλεται σε χρήμα[15].

11. Οι υπηρεσίες επίσης πληρώνονται σε μετρητά, όπως π.χ. τα δίδακτρα ενός σχολείου στην Θεσσαλονίκη[16] ή

12. Η ενοικίαση υποζυγίου στην Μικρά Ασία[17].

13. Αναφέρονται στην Βιθυνία άτομα που δανείσθηκαν μετρητά και που παρέδωσαν γι' αυτά στους δανειστές τους έγγραφες αποδείξεις[18].

14. Επίσης στην Βιθυνία οι φόροι πληρώνονται σε μετρητά[19].

15. Οι δωρεές σε ένα μοναστήρι της Χαλκιδικής γίνονται σε χρήμα και σε είδος[20].

16. Θεωρείται φυσικό οι μοναχοί να διαθέτουν μετρητά, μολονότι μερικοί από αυτούς προχωρούν τόσο πολύ την ακτημοσύνη ώστε δεν έχουν χρήματα για να δώσουν ελεημοσύνη σε φτωχούς[21].

17. Αντίθετα, στην Κύπρο ένας επίσκοπος δεν φαίνεται να διαθέτει μετρητά, έχει όμως ό,τι του χρειάζεται στο επισκοπείον του και κάνει ελεημοσύνη σε είδος[22]. Υπενθυμίζουμε ότι τον 9ο αιώνα η Κύπρος δεν ανήκε πια στην αυτοκρατορία αλλά αποτελούσε ένα είδος condominium των Βυζαντινών και των Αράβων.

18. «Κάπου στο θέμα Παφλαγονίας» ένας γεωργός λεγόμενος Μέτριος, ούτε πλούσιος ούτε φτωχός (*ἐν αὐταρκείᾳ διαβιών*), πηγαίνει κάθε χρόνο στο τοπικό πανηγύρι για να διαθέσει το περίσσευμα της παραγωγής του. *Τὰ μὲν πωλήσας, τὰ δὲ ἀνταλλάξας*, παίρνει τα χρειώδη και επιστρέφει. Μια φορά, στο δρόμο της επιστροφής βρίσκει ένα πουγγί με 1500 χρυσά νομίσματα· το είχε

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[13] Α. Παπαδόπουλος - Κεραμεύς, *Monumenta graeca et latina ad historiam Photii patriarchae pertinentia*, Πετρούπολη 1899, 11.

[14] *Acta Sanctorum*, Νοέμβριος IV, 648.

[15] Α. Παπαδόπουλος - Κεραμεύς, Συλλογὴ Παλαιστινῆς καὶ Συριακῆς ῾Αγιολογίας Ι, *Pravoslavnyj Palestinskij Sbornik* 19/3 (1907) 197, 201-202. Ελεημοσύνη εις είδος αναφέρεται τον 9ο αιώνα και στον Βίο της οσίας Αθανασίας της Αίγινας, αλλά αυτό συνέβαινε σε περίοδο σιτοδείας· συνεπώς, η διανομή τροφίμων δεν σημαίνει ότι υπήρχε έλλειψη χρημάτων. Βλ. Lydia Carras, The Life of Saint Athanasia of Aegina: a Critical Edition with Introduction, *Maistor, Classical, Byzantine and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning*, ed. by Ann Moffatt, Canberra 1984, 213.

[16] Dvornik, *ό.π.*, 62.

[17] *Acta Sanctorum*, Νοέμβριος II/1 (1984) 369· Παπαδόπουλος - Κεραμεύς, Συλλογή, *ό.π.*, 205 (δύο νομίσματα για το ταξείδι από το Αμόριον στις Πύλες της Βιθυνίας).

[18] V. Laurent, *La Vie merveilleuse de Saint Pierre d'Atroa*, Βρυξέλλες 1956, 173. Α. Παπαδόπουλος - Κεραμεύς, *᾿Ανάλεκτα ῾Ιεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας* IV, 378.

[19] Παπαδόπουλος - Κεραμεύς, *᾿Ανάλεκτα* IV, 378.

[20] *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 8 (1903) 197 (*χρυσόν, ἄργυρον ... χαλκὸν καὶ σίδηρον ... βύσσον ἢ κόκκινον ... δέρρεα ἠρυθροδανωμένα καὶ μέχρι τριχῶν αἰγείων ... σῖτον, ὄσπρια, ἔλαιον ...*).

[21] Παπαδόπουλος - Κεραμεύς, Συλλογή, *ό.π.*, 205, 209-210· Laurent, *ό.π.*, 131, 195.

[22] *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 16 (1907) 235.

χάσει ένας μεγάλος έμπορος (*πραγματευτὴς δόκιμος*), που επίσης πήγαινε κάθε χρόνο στο ίδιο πανηγύρι. Χίλια από τα νομίσματα αυτά ανήκαν εξ αρχής στον έμπορο, τα υπόλοιπα πεντακόσια προέρχονταν από συνεταίρους του και υπήρχε βέβαια και το κέρδος[23].

10ος - 11ος αιώνας

19. Ένας επίσκοπος της Θράκης δίνει 100 νομίσματα για να αγοράσει το λείψανο του αγίου Πέτρου του Αθωνίτη[24].

20. Σε χωριό της Φρυγίας και στην κώμη Λάγαινα της Παμφυλίας αναφέρονται χοιροβοσκοί, οι οποίοι εισπράττουν μισθό σε χρήμα καθώς και την διατροφή τους σε είδος[25]. Τα κείμενα αυτά είναι σημαντικά γιατί αποδεικνύουν ότι ο όρος μισθός πρέπει να νοείται ως αμοιβή σε χρήμα[26].

21. Ο αρχιεπίσκοπος Κορίνθου δίνει στον όσιο Λουκά τον Στειριώτη ένα χρυσό νόμισμα[27].

22. Στον μυθιστορηματικό Βίο του Βασιλείου του Νέου, σε επεισόδια που συμβαίνουν στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, γίνονται πολλές αναφορές σε χρυσά νομίσματα, που συχνά χρησιμεύουν για την αποτίμηση επίπλων ή ενδυμάτων, αλλά και σε οβολούς που χρησιμεύουν για τις καθημερινές συναλλαγές[28].

23. Μοναχοί στην Καππαδοκία αναγκάζονται να δανεισθούν δώδεκα οβολούς μολονότι ένας τους έχει δικά του χρυσά νομίσματα[29]. Στην επαρχία λοιπόν παρουσιάζεται μια κάποια δυσκολία για να χαλάσει κανείς χρυσά νομίσματα.

24. Στον Βίο του οσίου Νίκωνα γίνεται λόγος για την *χρυσοτελῆ εἴσπραξιν*, ένα φόρο που εισπράττεται στην Πελοπόννησο πραγματικά σε χρυσά νομίσματα αλλά και για τους οβολούς ή κέρματα, τα οποία ήταν απαραίτητα στην Σπάρτη για να αγοράσει κανείς ψωμί ή φρούτα και για να πληρώσει τους οικοδόμους· τα χρήματα αυτά κινδύνευαν να κλαπούν[30].

25. Χρήμα είναι απαραίτητο και στο Άγιον Όρος για την πληρωμή των εργατών· οι μοναχοί διαθέτουν μεγάλα ποσά· μιλιαρήσια και φόλλεις μοιράζονται στον καθένα τους[31].

26. Στον Βίο του Νείλου της Grottaferrata βλέπουμε μοναχούς που έχουν χρήματα, που δανείζονται χρυσά νομίσματα και τα μοιράζουν στους φτωχούς.

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[23] *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, ed. H. Delehaye, Βρυξέλλες 1902, 721-724. Η ενδιαφέρουσα αυτή περίπτωση πανήγυρης έχει τώρα μελετηθεί σε βάθος από την Αγγελική Λαΐου, Händler und Kaufleute auf dem Jahrmarkt, *Fest und Alltag in Byzanz*, hrsg. G. Prinzing und D. Simon, Μόναχο 1990, 53-70, 189-194.

[24] K. Lake, *The Early Days of Monasticism on Mount Athos*, Οξφόρδη 1909, 37.

[25] *Analecta Bollandiana* 11 (1892) 23· H. Delehaye, *Les saints stylites*, Βρυξέλλες 1923, 204.

[26] Συνεπώς ως αμοιβή σε χρήμα πρέπει να κατανοηθεί ο όρος *μισθός* όταν απαντά στον Γεωργικό Νόμο - παρά τις αμφιβολίες του Hendy, *ό.π.*, 298, σημ. 211.

[27] Migne, PG 111, 456.

[28] *Acta Sanctorum*, Μάρτιος III, 25*, 26*, 28*· A. N. Veselovskij, *Sbornik otdelenija russkago jazyka ... Imp. Akad. Nauk* 7, Οδησσός 1911, 9.

[29] *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 7 (1902) 564.

[30] D. Sullivan, *The Life of Saint Nikon*, Brookline Massachusetts 1987, 128, 184-190, 242, 258.

[31] J. Noret, *Vitae duae antiquae sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, Turnhout 1982, 52, 120, 156.

27. Η φορολογία για την κατασκευή χελανδίων στην Βυζαντινή Ιταλία καταβάλλεται σε χρυσά νομίσματα.

28. Για να εξαγοράσει όμως αιχμαλώτους από τους Άραβες, ο όσιος Νείλος, που βρίσκεται πιά έξω από την Βυζαντινή επικράτεια, κάνει έρανο σε είδος και μετατρέπει το προϊόν του σε νόμισμα (*ἐπισυνάξας... ἀπό τε σίτου καὶ οἴνου καὶ καρποῦ ἑτέρου μέχρι τῶν ἑκατὸν χρυσίνων καὶ βορδόνιον*)[32].

29. Στην Κωνσταντινούπολη μεγάλα ποσά σε χρυσάφι αλλάζουν χέρια και υπάρχουν υποψίες ότι ένας μοναχός μπορεί να έχει θαμμένο θησαυρό. Για την αγορά ενός (υποθέτω μεγάλου) ψαριού ο άγιος Συμεών πληρώνει ένα *ἀργύριον*[33].

30. Στην Κωνσταντινούπολη η ελεημοσύνη στον Ανδρέα Σαλό γίνεται σε οβολούς, φόλλεις, καμμιά φορά όμως και σε είδος (τρόφιμα, κρασί). Αντίθετα ένας φιλάργυρος μοναχός ζητά χρυσάφι από όσους εξομολογεί, χρυσάφι που ο άγιος μοιράζει στους φτωχούς[34].

Στον μακροσκελή Βίο του Λαζάρου του Γαλησιώτη αναφέρονται πολλά για την κυκλοφορία των νομισμάτων στην Μικρά Ασία.

31. Περιγράφεται ένας επαίτης μοναχός που μόλις έφτανε σε *κώμην ἢ ἐμπορεῖον* πουλούσε ό,τι του έδιναν στα χωριά και κρατούσε το τίμημα.

32. Σε μια άλλη περίπτωση, κάποιος δίνει στον άγιο και τους συντρόφους του ένα νόμισμα και αυτοί, μόλις φθάνουν στην πόλη της Λαοδίκειας προτείνουν *ἀπέλθωμεν εἰς τραπεζίτην ἵνα τὸ νόμισμα μεριοῦμεν*[35].

33. Επανειλημμένα γίνεται λόγος για ελεημοσύνη σε μετρητά (καμμιά φορά σ' αυτά προστίθενται και δώρα εις είδος, όπως τρόφιμα, ζώα),

34. Γίνεται λόγος για νομίσματα που έπεσαν από την τσέπη του ιδιοκτήτη τους,

35. Για νομίσματα που κλάπηκαν,

36. Για νομίσματα που χρησιμοποιούνταν για αγορά βιβλίων,

37. Για νομίσματα που στέλνονταν στην επαρχία ως δωρεά από την πρωτεύουσα[36].

38. Προς το τέλος του 11ου αιώνα ένας ταξιδιώτης στην Μικρά Ασία μεταφέρει χρήματα για τα έξοδά του ώστε να μη χρειασθεί να ζητιανέψει στο δρόμο και

39. Αναφέρονται επανειλημμένες περιπτώσεις χρηματικών δωρεών προς μοναστήρι[37].

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[32] Migne, PG 120, 21, 49, 108, 121.

[33] I. Hausherr, *Vie de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien par Nicétas Stéthatos*, Ρώμη 1928, 18, 76, 134-136, 152, 170-172.

[34] Migne, PG 111, 653, 656, 696, 708, 749, 757. Σε άλλο δημοσίευμα θα προσπαθήσω να δείξω πως ο μυθιστορηματικός αυτός Βίος πρέπει να χρονολογηθεί στον 11ο αιώνα.

[35] Παρόμοια περίπτωση αναφέρεται στον Βίο του αγίου Αλυπίου του 7ου αιώνα· όταν της δόθηκε ένα νόμισμα, η μητέρα του αγίου *ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν ἐξέδραμε ἵνα κέρμα ποιήσασα εἰς οἰκονομίαν τῆς ἑαυτῶν ἀποτροφῆς δαπανήσειεν*: Delehaye, *Les saints stylites*, 160.

[36] *Acta Sanctorum*, Νοέμβριος III, 511, 514, 517, 530, 536, 540, 541, 551, 555, 566, 584, 586.

[37] E. Sargologos, *La Vie de Saint Cyrille le Philéote, moine byzantin*, Βρυξέλλες 1984, 94, 126, 143, 232, 235-37.

40. Μοναχός στην Αγχίαλο πουλά τα επανωκαλύμαυχα που κατασκευάζει *πρὸς σῖτον*[38]. Εδώ έχουμε μια καθαρή περίπτωση οικονομίας φυσικών ανταλλαγών - εκτός αν υποθέσουμε ότι η φράση θα πρέπει να κατανοηθεί ως «να πουλήσει τα επανωκαλύμαυχα για (να αγοράσει) σιτάρι (με τα λεφτά που θα πάρει)»· αυτό όμως δεν είναι καθόλου βέβαιο.

Οι σαράντα περιπτώσεις που αναλύσαμε δίνουν την ακόλουθη εικόνα (παραπέμπω σε παρένθεση στον αύξοντα αριθμό της κάθε περίπτωσης):

Όλες οι *αγοραπωλησίες* που αναφέρονται γίνονται με μετρητά, ακόμη και στις μικρές πόλεις/μεγάλα χωριά (αρ. 18, 19, 22, 24, 29, 31, 36, 38). Εξαιρέσεις: ο χωρικός της Παφλαγονίας που διαθέτει τον 9ο αιώνα το περίσσευμα της παραγωγής του (αρ. 18) και ο μοναχός της Αγχιάλου (αρ. 40) που, γύρω στο έτος 1100, διαθέτει το εργόχειρό του. Και στις δύο περιπτώσεις έχουμε ανταλλαγές σε στοιχειώδες επίπεδο από ανθρώπους που ενδιαφέρονται να αποκτήσουν τα προς το ζην.

Όλες οι παρεχόμενες *υπηρεσίες* αμείβονται σε μετρητά, στην πρωτεύουσα καθώς και στα χωριά (αρ. 10, 11, 12, 20, 24, 25, 30).

Όλα τα *δάνεια* γίνονται σε χρήμα (αρ. 1, 13, 23, 26), εκτός από ένα (αρ. 4) που συνάπτεται στην Παφλαγονία σε εποχή σιτοδείας. Στην περίπτωση αυτή είναι πιθανό ότι ο δανεισμός σε είδος οφείλεται σε ειδικές συνθήκες. Δεν αποκλείεται όμως επίσης η περίπτωση αυτή, του τέλους του 8ου αιώνα, να αντανακλά και την στενότητα ρευστού που αντιμετώπισαν οι κάτοικοι της επαρχίας όταν ο Κωνσταντίνος Ε΄ γενίκευσε τη φορολογία σε χρήμα.

Η μοναδική μαρτυρούμενη περίπτωση συνεταιρισμού για εμπορικές επιχειρήσεις συνάπτεται κι αυτή σε χρήμα (αρ. 18).

Όλοι οι *φόροι* καταβάλλονται σε χρήμα (αρ. 14, 24, 27).

Οι *δωρεές* προς μοναστήρια γίνονται συνήθως σε χρήμα (αρ. 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 15, 21, 32, 37, 39), έχουμε όμως και περιπτώσεις που οι δωρεές γίνονται σε είδος (αρ. 15· πολύτιμα είδη)· δεν μνημονεύουμε εδώ τις δωρεές ακινήτων, λειτουργικών σκευών, εικόνων κλπ.

Η *ελεημοσύνη* γίνεται συχνά σε χρήμα (αρ. 2, 3, 4, 7, 26), μερικές φορές σε είδος (αρ. 10, 17, 31), άλλοτε σε χρήμα και σε είδος (αρ. 30, 33). Είναι πάντως χαρακτηριστικό ότι σε μια περίπτωση (αρ. 31) ένας επαίτης μοναχός δέχεται διάφορα είδη στα χωριά όπου ζητιανεύει και τα πουλά αντί χρημάτων μόλις φθάσει σε κωμοπόλεις ή σε αγορές.

Στα μικρά αυτά μέρη ήταν εξάλλου δύσκολο αν όχι αδύνατο να βρεθεί ένα άτομο με αρκετά μετρητά για να χαλάσει ένα χρυσό νόμισμα (θα χρειαζόταν δηλαδή 12 μιλιαρήσια ή 288 φολλεις). Αντίθετα στις πόλεις όπως η Λαοδίκεια του Λιβάνου, υπήρχαν *τραπεζίτες* ικανοί να χαλάσουν χρυσά νομίσματα (αρ. 32)· άρα εκεί και χρήμα άφθονο υπήρχε και επαγγελματίες που ειδικεύονταν στο εμπόριό του. Γι' αυτό, το χρήμα απασχολεί συνεχώς τους κατοίκους των πόλεων· φοβούνται μην το χάσουν (αρ. 34) ή μη τους το κλέψουν (αρ. 24, 35).

Στις επαρχιακές *πανηγύρεις* συχνάζουν έμποροι που μεταφέρουν πολύ σημαντικά ποσά (αρ. 18), τα οποία ανήκουν σε περισσότερους του ενός συνεταίρους. Σύμφωνα με την περιγραφή του επεισοδίου στην διήγηση του Μετρίου, οι έμποροι πηγαίνουν στην πανήγυρι με μεγάλες ποσότητες εμπορευμάτων και φεύγουν με το μεγάλο ποσό εισπράξεων — άρα οι συναλλαγές γίνονται σε χρήμα. Δεν γνωρίζουμε σε ποιό δαθμό οι επίσημοι έμποροι αυτοί έκαναν και ανταλλαγές εμπορευμάτων με άλλα αγαθά, κάτι τέτοιο όμως δεν θα ήταν καθόλου απίθανο.

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[38] *Ό.π.*, 117.

Πλήρης *έλλειψη* χρημάτων αναφέρεται μόνο σε σχέση με μοναχούς, των οποίων υπογραμμίζεται έτσι η ακτημοσύνη (αρ. 16), ή σε περιοχές που δρίσκονται έξω από την Βυζαντινή επικράτεια (αρ. 18, 28)[39].

Σύμφωνα με τα παραπάνω μπορούμε, νομίζω, να υποστηρίξουμε ότι η μεσοδυζαντινή οικονομία ήταν εκχρηματισμένη σε υψηλό δαθμό. Δεν φαίνεται ότι διέφερε πολύ από τις παραδοσιακές οικονομίες μεταλλικού χρήματος της Ευρώπης του 19ου αιώνα. Τα μετρητά ήταν άφθονα στις πόλεις, λιγώτερο άφθονα στα χωριά, και χρησιμοποιούνταν συνεχώς όχι μόνο για αποθησαυρισμό αλλά και για κάθε είδους πληρωμές. Οι καταβολές σε είδος ήταν σχετικά σπάνιες και γίνονταν κυρίως σε περιπτώσεις ελεημοσύνης ή δωρεών (στα χωριά αλλά και στις πόλεις, ακόμα και στην Κωνσταντινούπολη) ή σε περιπτώσεις στοιχειωδών ανταλλαγών στα χωριά. Μαρτυρούνται δανεισμός, εμπόριο του χρήματος και εμπορικοί συνεταιρισμοί.

Όλα αυτά φαίνεται πως ίσχυαν για την περίοδο από το δεύτερο μισό του 8ου αιώνα μέχρι το τελευταίο τέταρτο του 11ου. Οι Βίοι αγίων δεν μας παρέχουν στοιχεία που να μας επιτρέπουν να πούμε πως η κατάσταση αυτή άλλαξε δραστικά με την μεγάλη οικονομική κρίση και την υποτίμηση του νομίσματος που χαρακτηρίζει τις τελευταίες δεκαετίες του 11ου αιώνα. Παρατηρούμε όμως ότι ενώ ο έκδικος Ηλίας του 11ου αιώνα επιμένει ότι "ὑπόστασις πλούτου χρυσός", ο Ιωάννης Ζωναράς του 12ου αιώνα μιλά και πάλι για έντοκα δάνεια που συνάπτονταν σε είδος[40]· και ότι το ενοίκιο της γης (*πάκτον*) πληρωνόταν ακόμη το 1073 στην περιοχή της Μιλήτου με χρυσά νομίσματα, ενώ την πρώτη δεκαετία του 12ου αιώνα στην Μακεδονία τα πάκτα πληρώνονταν σε είδος[41]. Είναι άραγε αυτά δείγματα κλονισμού της πίστης προς το νόμισμα και μιας (προσωρινής) στροφής προς πιο σίγουρες αξίες — και προς πιο πρωτόγονες μορφές ανταλλαγών; Προαναγγέλλουν άραγε την γενίκευση του συστήματος της πρόνοιας; Τα ερωτήματα αυτά ξεπερνούν τα πλαίσια της παρούσας έρευνας.

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[39] Στην τελευταία αυτή περίπτωση, που αφορά την περιοχή της Ρώμης τον 10ο αιώνα, πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι το αποτέλεσμα ενός εράνου σε είδος αμέσως μετατράπηκε σε χρήμα.

[40] Migne, PG 127, 1136 και Γ. Ράλλη - Μ. Ποτλῆ, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων* 3, Αθήνα 1853, 307.

[41] *Ἔγγραφα Πάτμου* Β', έκδ. Μαρίας Νυσταζοπούλου - Πελεκίδου, Αθήνα 1980, αρ. 50· και *Actes d'Iviron* II, έκδ. J. Lefort, N. Oikonomidès, Denise Papachryssanthou, Παρίσι 1989, Παράρτημα II.

XV

The Jews of Chios (1049): A Group of *Excusati*

The case of the Jewish families given by Constantine IX Monomachos to the monastery of Nea Moni of Chios on 1049 has been studied by several scholars,[1] and among these Professor David Jacoby holds a distinguished position.[2] The purpose of the present paper is to place the case of the Jews of Chios in the broader context of eleventh-century Byzantine tax exemption.

We should first recall the information provided by the documents: In July 1049 Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos issued a chrysobull in favour of Nea Moni of Chios, granting it a certain degree of independence from the local bishop and, as financial support, 'the Jews who lived on this island', who were completely free and subservient to none. In other words, they must have been recent arrivals, probably from far away, since they did not yet appear in any tax register — and in this they were similar to the *paroikoi*, 'free and unknown to the fiscus'. The Jews throughout Chios would pay their head-tax (*kephalētiōn*) to the monastery, and the emperor limited the number of Jews to 15 families 'in order that the monastery be officially their lord'. These families would be exempt from all extraordinary contributions or corvées, even if these were imposed on the island by the emperor — special mention was made of the billeting of mercenaries.[3]

We know that in 1056, the founders of Nea Moni were condemned by the imperial tribunal and sent to exile, while the monastery's

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[1] A detailed analysis of the expressed points of view is to be found in Ph. Argenti, *The Religious Minorities of Chios: Jews and Roman Catholics* (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 63-92.

[2] Recently in D. Jacoby, 'Les Juifs de Byzance: une communauté marginalisée', in the proceedings of the conference, *Oi Perithōriakoi sto Byzantio* (Athens, 1993), pp. 128-9.

[3] I. and P. Zepos, *Jus Graecoromanum* (Athens, 1931), Vol. I, pp. 633-4.

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properties were confiscated.[4] However, not for long. The emperor Isaac Komnēnos (1057-59), under the influence of Patriarch Michael Kēroularios, rehabilitated the monks and returned all their properties.

The privilege concerning the Jews has been confirmed by Isaac's successor, Constantine X Doukas, in 1062. This chrysobull is known in an incomplete form,[5] but its contents have been reconstructed thanks to a (now lost) manuscript of the Greek Gymnasium at Adrianople.[6] The emperor mentions the donation of his predecessor, declares that the 15 families include all the Jews living on Chios, and orders them to stay forever in buildings belonging to the monastery — if they do not do so, they are threatened by a fine of three times the head-tax and three times the rent. He declares that their descendants will also belong to the monastery and forbids the installation of any other Jews on the island.

The above privileges are mentioned in the chrysobull of Emperor Nikēphoros III Botaneiatēs (1079), who remarks that they had long been forgotten. The emperor declares that he confirms all donations of his predecesssors but without giving any specific details.[7] Consequently, one can assume that the relationship between the monastery and the Jewish families was not revived in 1079 — it was probably rendered inoperative before that date.

Were these 15 families the total number of Jews living on Chios in 1049, or only part of them? The way in which the figure appears in the document of 1049 leaves room for doubt: on one hand, the emperor speaks of 'all the Jews, all over Chios'; on the other, he fixes their number in a phrase vaguely stating that he intended to make the monastery an 'official' lord over the Jews. In my view, in order to understand the arrangement better, it should be stressed that in Byzantium all donations, imperial or other, that were not accompanied by a figure indicating the importance of the donation (*aposos dōrea*), could be contested and, at a certain moment, they usually were declared null and void.[8] As we shall see below, the definition by a figure was also common practice in all cases of similar donations concerning non-Jewish households. Consequently, the figure 15, necessary to legalize the monastery's claims, should be understood as a ceiling beyond which the monks could not claim any further head-taxes from the Jewish families or exempt such families from the secondary fiscal burdens and collect a cash payment instead.

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[4] On the history of Nea Moni the best work is by Ch. Bouras, *E Nea Monē tēs Chiou: Istoria kai Architektonikē* (Athens, 1981).

[5] Zepos, *Jus Graecoromanum*, Vol. I, p. 640.

[6] See B. Stephanides, 'Oi Kodikes tēs Adrianoupoleōs', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 14 (1905), 594. The relevant passages are assembled in Argenti, *Religious Minorities*, pp. 66-7.

[7] Zepos, *Jus Graecoromanum*, Vol. I, pp. 643-4.

[8] Ibid., p. 380.

In other words, I think that in 1049 there were either 15 or fewer Jewish families on the whole island of Chios and that the monastery was given the authorization to collect the head tax from all of them. The total of 15 families was certainly reached, one way or the other, by 1062, and Constantine X was obliged to face the problem created by their progeny; he recognized that the monastery had the right to keep them on its premises and collect the head tax of the descendants of these families — in other words, the maximum number of 15 was abolished provided that the new families were direct descendants of the old ones.[9] At the same time, in order to protect the interests of the fiscus, the emperor forbade the monastery to attract any further Jewish settlers to the island, who could very easily be confused with the local families and thus escape their fiscal obligations. A similar arrangement would have been in order in the case of Christians, with the only difference that these were not an easily definable group. In any case, it seems that the restrictions imposed by Constantine X were not respected for long. Nikēphoros Botaneiatēs says that already in 1079 the privilege of the monastery concerning the Jews was inoperative and forgotten. And, according to Benjamin of Tudela, by the mid-twelfth century there were 400 Chiot Jews.[10]

The chrysobull of 1062 presents one peculiarity for which I know no parallel: the obligation for the Jews to rent the monastery's properties or face a very stiff fine. The fine is described as a multiple of what the Jews were already paying to the monastery, and it appears to be a punishment for breaking an agreement. I shall return to this aspect below.

With regard to the type of donation, we must turn to the donations of *oikoi exkoussatoi*, known from other monastic documents. We can quote the following tenth- to twelfth-century examples:

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[9] This is not a unique case: in 1079 Nikēphoros III Botaneiatēs granted the monastery of Melana the right to exempt 100 *paroikoi* from all secondary taxes, provided that they were direct descendants of the *paroikoi* and *douloparoikoi* who already belonged to the monastery: see *Actes de Lavra,* Vol. I, ed. P. Lemerle *et al.* (Paris, 1970), No. 38, ll. 24-6.

[10] *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, ed. M.N. Adler (London, 1907), p. 17.

944-959: Constantine VII Porphyrogenētos gave the monastery of Leontia 36 *oikoi exkoussatoi* in the theme of Thessalonica. These *oikoi* had disappeared by 975 due to foreign invasions.[11]

979/80 and earlier: Basil II gave John the *synkellos* (one of the founders of Iviron) 60 *oikoi dēmosiarioi*, namely those paying their taxes to the state, and ordered that they be subject to tax exemption (*exkousseuesthai*).[12]

Before 984: Basil II gave the monastery of Lavra 25 *oikoi exkoussatoi* in Chrysopolis, who paid their taxes (or a contribution — *telountes*) to Lavra.[13]

November 999: The *katepanō* of Italy, Gregory Tarchaneiōtēs, donated the monastery of St Peter in Taranto together with its *ekskoussatoi*, to the *spatharokandidatos* Christophoros Bochomakēs, a hero of the war against the Arabs.[14]

In 1054: During a trial, Argyros, the *doux* of Byzantine Italy, ruled that a tax-payer can be considered the *exkoussatos* of someone else if he paid him the *exkoussatikion*,[15] that is the payment owed by the *exkoussatos*.

In 1143-80: Manuel II Komnēnos gave the metropolis of Kerkyra 24 *oikoi exkoussatoi* in the city, and a further 50 outside its limits.[16]

It should be remembered here that the *excusati* also appear in Latin sources from around 800 concerning Istria and Italy, as an institution surviving from the times of the Byzantines: they were tax payers, liberated of their obligations towards the state, and attached, in small groups, to officers or monasteries to whom they made payments and/or offered services.[17] But these cases are, of course, too remote from eleventh-century Chios.

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[11] *Actes d'Iviron*, Vol. I, ed. J. Lefort *et al.* (Paris, 1985), No. 2, ll. 21-5. This text and the following ones have been commented upon, among others, by A. Kazhdan, 'Ekskussiia i ekskussaty v Vizantii X-XII vv.', *Vizantiiskie Ocherki* (Moscow, 1961), pp. 187-91; P. Lemerle, *The Agrarian History of Byzantium* (Galway, 1979), pp. 168ff.

[12] *Actes d' Iviron*, Vol. II (Paris, 1990), No. 32, l. 16.

[13] Ibid., Vol. I, No. 6, ll. 23, 32-3.

[14] F. Trinchera, *Syllabus graecarum membranarum* (Naples, 1865), No. 10.

[15] G.B. Veltrami, *Documenti longobardi e greci per la storia dell'Italia meridionale nel Medio evo* (Rome, 1877), No. 9; A. Prologo, *Le carte che si conservano nell'Archivio del Capitolo metropolitano della città di Trani* (Barletta, 1877), p. 15. Cf. J.-M. Martin, *La Pouille du VI^e au XII^e siècle* (Paris, 1993), p. 301.

[16] Fr. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi*, Vol. V (Vienna, 1887), p. 15. Cf. the commentary of E. Papagiannē, *Ta oikonomika tou eggamou klērou sto Byzantio* (Athens, 1986), pp. 200-201.

The *oikoi exkoussatoi* of the tenth- to twelfth-century documents appear to be independent fiscal units, family-sized or bigger, situated in cities or in the countryside — but not on the monastic lands. Consequently they are not the *paroikoi* of the monastery. They appear to be free landowners — nothing in the texts suggests that they might have been dependent peasants and they are usually distinguished quite clearly from the *paroikoi* who are sometimes mentioned in the same charters. They initially paid their taxes to the fiscus (*dēmosiarioi*). When becoming *exkoussatoi*, they were liberated from their obligations to the state and they paid part of their taxes (*telountes*) or a special lump contribution, the *exkoussatikion*, to the person or institution they depended on (literally: on whom they rely, *anakeisthai*). If the monastery they were attached to was donated to another one, they followed in its wake.

The number of *excusati* is always stated with precision, but not the extent of their possessions, no doubt because these were not a factor taken into consideration when defining their payments.[18] This would mean that to their 'lord' they paid their personal taxes, which amounted to a fixed sum every year: in the eleventh century, these were mainly constituted from the *synōnē* (paid by those who had a pair of oxen) and the *kapnikon* (hearth tax), and could go up to one gold coin per household.[19] On the contrary, their land tax or other basic tax due because of their profession went to the state.

Their 'lord' also benefited from the fact that they were freed from all secondary state taxes and corvées, and he received the payment in cash. This could amount to quite a substantial sum of money. In the Venetian *praktikon* of Lampsakos of 1219, which certainly reflects prior Byzantine practice, the *adaeratio* of all corvées and extraordinary

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17. The main document is the *placitum* of Risano (on which see L. Margetić, 'Quelques aspects du plaid de Rižana', *Revue des études byzantines*, 46 (1988), 125-34), which has been analysed and compared with other texts concerning the *excusati* by P.S. Leicht in 'Gli excusati nelle provincie italiane soggette all'impero d'Oriente', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 24 (1956), 22-8.
18. The land tax was paid by the owner of any property and was proportionate to its fiscal value ($^1/_{24}$ of the value).
19. This is the tariff applied in Miletus in 1073. See *Eggapha Patmou*, Vol. II, ed. M. Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou (Athens, 1980), No. 50, ll. 312-14.

taxes could reach four gold coins annually.[20] Of course, this example comes from a time and context different from the one under discussion here, but it is nevertheless useful as it gives an indication of the possible size of this contribution.

This, in my view, is the *exkoussatikion*, which I interpret as the payment due by an *exkoussatos* (the word is only indirectly related to *exkousseia*, the tax exemption): a cash payment which entailed freedom from the need to pay any secondary taxes and corvées.

When this revenue was granted to a person in the service of the state, usually someone in the military, this formed part of his pay. Such arrangements bring to mind the measure taken by Nikēphoros I (802-811) in order to enable poor soldiers to acquire the necessary equipment. He appointed a number of co-contributors and all participated in order to equip the soldiers.[21] They also bring to mind the fiscal revenue given to the holders of *pronoiai* – but this occurred at a much later date and in a different context.

When the *exkoussatoi* were given to a monastery, this was a simple donation of cash that the beneficiary could collect directly from taxpayers, without the intervention of the state. As it had nothing to do with the land tax it was easily distinguishable from the *logisimon solemnion,* known from the Fiscal Treaty of the Marciana and consisting of the right of a private person or an institution to collect a part of their land tax directly from the peasants.[22]

Let us now return to Chios of 1049. The arrangement described in the preceding lines is practically identical with that concerning the Jews, but with one difference: they are called 'families', not households (*oikoi*) as the other *exkoussatoi*. This is probably due to the fact that they did not possess any real estate, but rented properties of Nea Moni. We know that the notion of *oikos* implies the existence of private property; it was often used to indicate big private properties, but also the households of free peasantry.[23]

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[20] G.L.F. Tafel and G.M. Thomas, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig,* Vol. II (Vienna, 1856), p. 209. Cf. M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 222-3, and the important commentary on this document by D. Jacoby, 'The Venetian Presence in the Latin Empire of Constantinople (1204-1261): The Challenge of Feudalism and the Byzantine Inheritance', *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik,* 43 (1993), 164-82.

[21] Theophanis, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor, Vol. I (Leipzig, 1883), p. 486.

[22] F. Dölger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der byzantinischen Finanzverwaltung besonders des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts* (repr. Darmstadt, 1960), pp. 117-18.

[23] On the problem of the *oikos*, especially the aristocratic one, see M. Kaplan, *Les hommes et la terre à Byzance du VI^e au XI^e siècle* (Paris, 1992), pp. 331ff.

In addition, the Jewish families had to pay the monastery their personal taxes, in the documents persistently called *kephalētion*, the Greek word for *capitatio*, head tax, which could have been a special tax for the Jews,[24] different from the hearth tax (*kapnikon*) that the Christian households had to pay. We know nothing about this tax, and probably the term had derogatory implications in the twelfth century. In any case, this was a tax defined by the state, and consequently was a fixed and constant amount, presumably the same for all the Jews of the empire.

The Jews also had to pay rent for their housing on the monastic property. It is obvious that if they were recent arrivals on the island they did not possess real estate and they had to rent their lodgings — and it is not surprising that they chose to rent properties belonging to Nea Moni. One can assume that the *capitation* and the rent were the only two payments that they made to the monastery, as these are the only ones to be tripled in the chrysobull of 1062 as a penalty for those who would abandon the monastic housing. One has to assume, therefore, that the rent included the amount of money that the monastery had to collect from the Jewish families for the tax exemption that it had obtained for them — a tax exemption that certainly would bring profit to the monastery, and not to its *exkoussatoi*, irrespective of their religion.[25] Consequently, one can assume that these rents were considerably inflated.

It could be expected that when the monastery suffered the difficulties of 1056, some of these families may have tried to settle elsewhere, on private property or for cheaper rent. But this situation did not last for long. The chrysobull of 1062 obliged them all to continue renting the monastery's housing in perpetuity. This move was not aimed at limiting the freedom of the Jews, specifically or in general; it was merely a way to force them to continue paying Nea Moni the compensation for the tax exemption that they enjoyed. Here again, all is motivated by fiscal considerations and by the desire to protect the revenues of the monks, in a spirit of 'equity'.

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[24] John Zonaras, *Chronographia*, Vol. III, Bonn, p. 263, suggests that in his time *kephalētiōn* indicated a tax fitting for the Jews. See F. Dölger, 'Die Frage der Judensteuer in Byzanz', *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 26 (1933), 1-24 = F. Dölger, *Paraspora* (Ettal, 1961), pp. 358-77.

[25] A similar arrangement seems to have been made between the monastery of Vatopedi and its 24 Christian tenants of Chrysoupolis, who received a tax exemption in 1080 and 1082. See M. Goudas, 'Byzantiaka eggrapha tēs en Athō ieras monēs tou Vatopediou', *Epetēris Etaireias Byzantinōn Spoudōn*, 3 (1926), 121, l. 18; 122, l. 30; 125, l. 16; 127, ll. 39-41.

No special treatment was meted out to the Jews of Chios in 1049 and 1062: 'Le problème traité est uniquement d'ordre fiscal, de caractère local et sans aucune portée générale'.[26]

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[26] Jacoby, 'Les Juifs de Byzance', 128.

XVI

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE BYZANTINE COUNTRYSIDE IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE Xth CENTURY

The Xth century is a period of social transformation in the Byzantine empire. According to the prevailing theory, the population of the provinces, mainly made up of small landowners, was then undergoing a change, due to the proliferation of big estates of aristocratic families or of ecclesiastical institutions: in their insatiable desire to increase their domains and their revenues, the 'powerful' Byzantines put pressure upon their neighbours in order to acquire their land –preferably land that was already cultivated and did not require investments in order to become productive. From their side, the small landowners who decided to sell, had little choice but to stay on the same piece of land and cultivate it as *paroikoi*, i.e. as dependent tenant peasants. The catastrophic winter of 927/28 abruptly accelerated this process[1].

Becoming the *paroikos* of a big landowner was not necessarily a bad arrangement for a peasant, at least in the short run. Lay and ecclesiastic landowners protected their men in all manner of adversity, and sometimes

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[1] The bibliography concerning the agrarian problem in Byzantium is vast. I would quote the classical analysis of the main sources by P. LEMERLE, *The Agrarian History of Byzantium from the Origins to the Twelfth Century*, Galway 1979, and the important book by G. LITAVRIN, *Vizantijskoe obščestvo i gosudarstvo v X-XI vv.*, Moscow 1977; the important recent books of A. HARVEY, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire, 900-1200*, Cambridge 1989, and of M. KAPLAN, *Les hommes et la terre à Byzance du VIe au XIe siècle*, Paris 1992; and the even more recent and provocative article of A. KAZHDAN, State, Feudal and Private Economy in Byzantium, *DOP* 47, 1993, 83-100.

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offered them reasonably good working conditions thanks to their fiscal privileges[2]. But this transformation of the peasantry had important consequences for the State finances: it meant that the independent taxpayers, who used to pay up all their taxes in the past, were now sheltered by the big landowners' privileges, and did not pay them any more. The decrease of the fiscal revenue was felt in Constantinople and the Xth century emperors issued a series of novellae, the purpose of which was to stop the wealthy from acquiring land belonging to the free small peasantry. The fact that many laws have subsequently been issued on the same subject, shows that the legislation did not attain its goal right away. And we do not know to which point the small free property system was corroded and the State revenues had fallen at the beginnings of this legislative effort against the big landowners[3]. The present paper is concerned with this last question.

In the technical vocabulary of the times, landowners were defined either as 'powerful' (*dynatoi*) or as 'poor' (*penetes*). But the line drawn between them was not always clear, as both terms have a qualitative connotation originating from different principles. The best definition that I know, is that *dynatos* is the person who, thanks to his social position and/or his clout and/or his relations, can intimidate the others[4].

Another distinction between these two social groups was inspired by fiscal criteria and might appear as clearer. It was based on the fiscal concept of *chorion* (village), an agglomeration of small landowners, with some communal property and common responsibility for acquitting the village's fiscal obligations. This last aspect of fiscal solidarity was fundamental, in spite of the fact that the taxes of villagers were calculated individually according to what each of them possessed, and that there was little communal activity, except when facing the tax collector[5]. The *chorion* was thus a fiscal unit of substantial dimensions, no doubt composed essentially by *penetes* –a unit composed of many individuals, all good taxpayers, with whom the fiscus would deal collectively.

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[2] This I tried to show in Ἡ Πεῖρα περὶ παροίκων, *Ἀφιέρωμα στὸν Νῖκο Σβορῶνο* I, Rethymno 1986, 232-241.

[3] We now have a new edition of these novellae: N. SVORONOS, *Les novelles des empereurs macédoniens concernant la terre et les stratiotes*, éd. posthume par P. GOUNARIDIS, Athens 1994; as it often happens with posthumus publications, it presents several shortcomings: see L. BURGMANN, Editio per testamentum, *Rechtshistorisches Journal* 13, 1994, 455-479.

[4] SVORONOS, *Les novelles*, 70, 71 (n° 2).

By rejuvenating and better defining the traditional preemption rights, the Xth century emperors tried to impede the powerful from acquiring property inside the village communities. One term used to qualify these wealthy landowners, was that of 'powerful persons', *prosopa*[6], i.e. individuals whose domains were large enough to be considered as separate fiscal units. It is obvious that any fiscal 'prosopon' had to be a *dynatos*, i.e. a landowning individual or institution, such as a monastery.

It is important to note that in all this effort to ensure the regular collection of taxes, the Xth century governments seem not to have seriously envisaged –and, even less, tried– to diminish or cancel the fiscal privileges and other advantages of the *dynatoi*, as if they were an inevitable fact of life. They have only tried to protect the 'good taxpayers' by keeping them inside their villages and away from the powerful's domains and protection. The Xth century legislation was motivated by narrowly fiscal –and not social– considerations.

In this context, one has to estimate that the fiscal obligations of the powerful should have been more lenient than those of the poor; not in absolute figures, but as a proportion of the total revenue. Let me explain what I mean.

Powerful and poor had to pay the basic land tax, the *demosion*, which was calculated for all according to the same rates and was directly proportionate to the value of the taxed property[7]. No-one could escape from this obligation, except if he could obtain a special privilege, called *logisimon*, and liberating him from the payment of the basic land tax. But until the second half of the XIth century, this privilege was granted rather sparingly and mostly to ecclesiastical institutions. Thus one may assume that as far as the *demosion* is concerned, powerful and poor were taxed proportionately to their properties.

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[5] The limited extent of communal activities in the Byzantine villages is rightly stressed by KAPLAN, *Hommes et terre*, 211 ff.

[6] E.g. SVORONOS, *Les novelles*, n° 2, l. 77, 86-87.

[7] The basic land tax normally amounted to 1/24th of the fiscal value of the taxed property and was increased by the addition of some surtaxes, called *parakolouthemata*.

But there were also the side taxes, obligations and corvees, which were neither equally distributed nor exacted from all. The powerful were, by definition, not submitted to the degrading ones. On the other hand, they were struck by some extraordinary taxes (such as the *monoprosopon* that we shall see below) which were expensive *per se*, but relatively light in relation to their properties. In other words, the powerful were undertaxed as far as their secondary obligations were concerned.

Also they could obtain an *exkousseia*, i.e. an exemption from some or all secondary taxes. This privilege was granted more easily than the *logisimon*. But in the texts that we are going to discuss below, tax exemption is irrelevant as we will be discussing powerful landowners who did not escape from their secondary taxes but paid them in full.

We shall focus on some texts describing an extraordinary contribution imposed on the Peloponnesian army and the Peloponnesian *dynatoi* in the Xth century and try to establish the relative importance of each of these groups and of the peasants that depended from them. The ultimate purpose will be to evaluate the relative importance of the dependent peasantry in the Peloponnesos and to compare this conclusion with what we know from the Thrakesion in Asia Minor at approximately the same time.

The Testimony of Constantine Porphyrogennetos

Our basic information comes from a well-known text of Constantine Porphyrogennetos[8]. The events described are dated under the reign of

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[8] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS, *De Administrando Imperio*, ed. Gy. MORAVCSIK - R. J. H. JENKINS, ch. 51, l. 199-204 and ch. 52. The texts that I am going to use *infra* have been discussed recently by W. TREADGOLD, The Army in the Works of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici* 29, 1992, 77-162, esp. 99-100 and 125-127. Treadgold's approach and conclusions are completely different from mine, so much so that I do not need discussing the many points of disagreement, except whenever my argument is directly concerned.

Romanos I Lakapenos (920-944), at the time when the protospatharios John Proteuon was strategos in the Peloponnesos: this officer is known from other texts of the same treatise concerning a revolt of the Melingoi and Ezeritai Slavs, events that have been variously dated: early 921 was proposed by Jenkins and others before him[9], 934 by S. Runciman, and 935 by G. Litavrin who partly followed B. Ferjančić[10]. All are uncertain; the latter seems to me more likely, but does not carry conviction. In any case, this detail has no importance for our argument.

We learn that emperor Romanos Lakapenos intended to have the Peloponnesians participate to a [one-season] campaign in Byzantine Italy, in the theme of Longobardia. The Peloponnesians opted against the campaign, and proposed to give [instead] a thousand equipped horses and one hundred pounds in gold coins (i.e. 7.200 nomismata), and this they supplied with great readiness.

To collect the above, contributions at fixed rates were exacted from almost all the *prosopa* of the Peloponnesos (with some, I believe insignificant, exceptions, see infra) and from all the 'soldiers' of the Peloponnesian army. The *prosopa* provided the horses. The two metropolitans of Corinth and of Patras gave four horses each, the bishops and the monasteries two horses each, and the monasteries without means, one horse between two. The contributions of the lay *dynatoi* were fixed according to the precedence of titles that each held and which were obviously thought to correspond to a certain economic situation: the *protospatharioi* gave three horses each; the *spatharokandidatoi*, two horses each; and the *spatharioi* and *stratores*, one horse each.

Cash was collected from the whole 'army' of the Peloponnesos. Each 'soldier' contributed five nomismata in respect to this campaign; from those absolutely without means (*pantelos aporoi*), five nomismata from every two were exacted. This made up the total of 7.200 gold coins.

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[9] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS, *De Administrando Imperio* II, Commentary, London 1962, 204.

[10] KONSTANTIN BAGRJANARODNYJ, *Ob upravlenii imperiej*, Moscow 1989, 436-437.

The Peloponnesian Soldiers and their contributions

Although presented here as an extraordinary arrangement, the soldiers' cash contribution is in fact a well-known procedure. We know of a similar example from the accounts of the campaign against Crete in the year 949: we are told that eight hundred soldiers of the theme of the Thrakesion (Western Asia Minor) contributed four gold coins each for not participating to the campaign; 41 pounds and 32 nomismata (or 2.984 nomismata) were thus collected, part of which (24 pounds and 56 nomismata) was used to pay the salaries of 705 Armenian officers and soldiers of the theme of Charpezikion, who actually went to Crete[11]. We can assume that a similar arrangement was also made in the case of the Peloponnesos: the soldiers paid cash to avoid the hardships of the campaign, and with the money that was thus collected, other, less discriminating and, probably, less expensive soldiers were hired for the actual campaign.

There is one more detail worth pointing to. The total amount of 2.984 nomismata of the Thrakesion could be collected from 800 men only if part of them, 108, were also classified as 'completely without means' and paid half as much as the others[12]. This would mean that 13.5% of the soldiers of the Thrakesion were 'without means'.

In both cases we have the application, on a large scale, of the basic procedure of the *strateia*. The soldier farmer, holding land permanently registered as military, had the obligation to maintain a horse and an armour and to make himself available to the army whenever needed; in the IXth century, the soldier-farmer was called for actual service once every four years[13]. When on campaign, he also received a salary. As a compensation for the acquisition and maintenance of his military equipment, he and his land were exempted from all secondary contributions and corvees, that burdened the non-soldiers. The military obligation, attached to the land, not to the person, was hereditary[14].

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[11] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENNETOS, *De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae* (Bonn), 666-667. I see no reason to imagine, against all evidence, that the Charpezikion soldiers were members of the Banu Habib tribe, as hypothesized by TREADGOLD, The Army, 128 ff.

[12] I have pointed to this discrepancy and gave the explanation in: N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *Actes de Dionysiou*, Paris 1968, 39. The discrepancy is ignored by TREADGOLD, The Army, 127, who keeps imagining a Thrakesion of *ca* 10.000 soldiers.

Now, whenever it was impossible for the holder of a military lot to accomplish personally the military service (as in the case of the widow of the soldier), a compensatory payment of about 4-6 gold coins (or 2-3 coins in case of soldiers without means) was required[15]. Thus, in both cases, of the Peloponnesos and of the Thrakesion, we have the principle of the compensatory payment applied at a large scale, motivated not from an objective need, but from the preference of the *stratiotai* and the acceptance of their proposal by the authorities[16].

It is reasonable to assume that if the military service was conceived in such a fiscal mentality, there must have been an evaluation of what a 'fair' or 'typical' military holding would be –what holding would combine in a optimum way the right revenue for its soldier-owner and the best protection of the interests of the fiscus. To put it differently: on one hand, the state was losing revenue because of the partial tax exemption granted to stratiotic lands and had all interest to diminish these losses to the degree possible; on the other hand, the state acknowledged that the stratiotes needed sufficient revenue, in order to survive and be properly equipped. As the income derived from the tax exemption was in principle proportionate to the value (and, consequently, to the revenue) of the properties held by the stratiotes, the question would be to define what quantity of property would be sufficient to create a well-off soldier without abandoning to him more fiscal revenue than what was really necessary.

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[13] I have discussed the pertinent texts in: Middle-Byzantine Provincial Recruits: Salary and Armament, *Gonimos. Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies presented to L. G. Westerink at 75*, Buffalo, N. Y. 1988, 121-136; a general study of the question with bibliographical indications but holding to the author's previous points of view, in: J. HALDON, Military Service, Military Lands and the Status of Soldiers. Current Problems and Interpretations, *DOP* 47, 1993, 1-67; on the contrary, new points of view that will certainly generate discussions, are proposed by KAPLAN, *Hommes et terre*, 231-255.

[14] The relationship between possession of land and military service has been put to doubt by Martha GREGORIOU-IOANNIDOU, Les biens militaires et le recrutement à Byzance. Essai de déterminer et interpréter le rapport entre les biens militaires et le recrutement, *Βυζαντιακά* 12, 1992, 215-226.

[15] *Actes de Dionysiou*, 39.

[16] In earlier times, under Leo VI (886-912), compensatory payment for not participating to a campaign was accepted selectively, from individual soldiers who chose to do so, while the rest of their theme actually went with the army: *De Administrando Imperio*, ch. 51, l. 192-198. In the case of the Peloponnesos (sometime between 920 and 944), this was a collective decision of the whole theme. In that of the Thrakesion (949), one has the impression that payment from the soldiers of the Thrakesion was exacted from the authorities –at least, nothing in the text shows that the soldiers had any opportunity to express their will on this subject. It is interesting to follow how the *adaeratio* of the military service was imposing itself from the selective free choice, to the collective free choice and then to the obligation imposed from above. But the examples that we have are very few and not always clear; thus I would prefer to avoid any general conclusion.

The question has been asked in similar terms by the Byzantines; efforts have been made to define what a 'normal' stratiotic holding, a *stratiotikos oikos*, should be. In a novella dating from 947 (?) Constantine Porphyrogennetos established officially that the *strateia* of a horseman, i.e. of a typical thematic soldier, should preferably be worth 4 pounds of gold (or 288 nomismata) in real estate: this would have been the 'right quantity' (*dikaia posotes*)[17]. Another text of the Porphyrogennetos, not official in character, considers that the properties worth four pounds were a minimum for the horseman and that the right figure would rather be five pounds (360 nomismata)[18]. But it seems that the official figure always remained at 4 pounds, as this is still the figure quoted by Nikephoros Phokas (963-969)[19]. We shall use the 'legally confirmed' figure of four pounds for our calculations that follow.

It must be stressed right away, though, that this value of 288 gold coins for the property of a soldier-farmer was not mandatory and that individual properties may have varied considerably. But as these variations could go both ways, I consider the figure 288 as an average.

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[17] SVORONOS, *Les novelles*, 118, 119.

[18] *De Cerimoniis* (Bonn), 695.

[19] SVORONOS, *Les novelles*, 176. Nikephoros Phokas brought that figure up to 12 pounds to finance his heavily armoured cavalry.

Now, the real estate of such a value could consist of all kinds of land, of sharply varying productivity: arable, vineyards, gardens, etc. But we assume that land submitted to intensive cultivation and, consequently, more productive, had a higher fiscal value. By fiscal value I mean the one that was used to evaluate the properties in view of imposing them. According to a fiscal handbook of the Xth c., one should count one nomisma for one modios of land of first quality[20]. Starting from that figure, we can build some hypotheses on the assumption that we have imaginary properties consisting uniquely of first quality land. In this case, a soldier would have possessed, as an average, 288 modioi. But one must stress that this is a very hypothetical example and that in reality the production of a military lot was much more varied. Although certainly inexact, we keep the above scheme for the sake of clarity in the calculations.

Two hundred eighty eight modioi is a considerable quantity of arable. We know that the estimations of the surface that could be cultivated in Byzantine times by one pair of oxen during one year varied considerably, between 83 and 213 modioi. It has been proposed that as an average, one should count around 140 modioi per *zeugarion*[21]. Thus the land of a *stratiotes* corresponded roughly to two *zeugaria*, and needed two manned pairs of oxen in order to be cultivated properly. In other words, a *stratiotes* was normally sustained by the work of two well-off farmer families, his own and another one that worked on his land, probably of a relative, but may be of a salaried worker or even of a *paroikos*[22]. But this was certainly not applied with uniformity, on the contrary: we know of some examples of soldiers who seem to have been fending for themselves and their own family without the support of a larger *oikos*[23].

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[20] J. LEFORT and al., *Géométries du fisc byzantin*, Paris 1991, 62 (for the date, see 34-35).

[21] E. SCHILBACH, *Byzantinische Metrologie*, Munich 1970, 68-70.

[22] Leo VI insists that a *stratiotikos oikos* must be an affluent unit, able to ensure the agricultural production while the soldier will be away on campaign; see LEMERLE, *Agrarian History*, 141. Two eighth century texts envisage clearly that a military household is composed of properties held by two brothers, only one of whom is the soldier: cf. my analysis in: Middle-Byzantine Provincial Recruits, 130 ff.

In what follows, we shall base our calculations on fiscal rather than on demographic criteria. Our basic unit will be the nuclear family possessing a pair of oxen and cultivating the corresponding land –the peasant *zeugaratos*. Now we know that from the economic and fiscal point of view, one *zeugaratos* was the equivalent of two families of *boïdatoi* (who possessed only one ox) or of four families of *aktemones* (with no oxen)[24]. So, theoretically, two *boidatoi* could have replaced one *zeugaratos* with no major difference from the fiscal point of view, but with a major difference from the demographic point of view, as there would be two families instead of one. This is a weakness of our calculations that one should constantly keep in mind, whenever we mention, infra, peasants as '*zeugaratoi* or the equivalent'. Because we are talking fiscal units, not demographic ones.

The passage of the *De Administrando Imperio* that we are studying has been used to estimate the total number of soldiers of the Peloponnesos, who provided the 7.200 gold coins. The reasoning goes as follows: if they were all affluent and paid 5 nomismata each, they would number 1.440 men, if they were all poor, they would number 2880; and the figure of ca 2.000 soldiers has been proposed as something close to reality. I think that this last figure should be rejected right away, as it would mean that the Peloponnesos had only 880 well-off soldiers as opposed to 1.120 indigent[25]. The figure that seems to me more likely, would be an army of 1.500-1.600 men, out of whom 120-320, i.e. a 8-20%, would have been indigent. This would show a situation similar to the one prevailing in the Thrakesion, where the percentage of indigent soldiers would have been 13.5%[26].

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[23] This would have been, for example, the case of the soldier Mousoulios, from the *Life of St. Philaretos*: when left without a horse at the time of the campaign, he turns to a neighbour for help; obviously he did not expect much help from his own household. See M.-H. Fourmy and M. Leroy, La Vie de saint Philarète, *Byzantion* 9, 1934, 125-127.

[24] Schilbach, *Metrologie*, 256.

[25] The figure of 2.000 (1.120 poor and 880 not very poor) is accepted by Treadgold, The Army, 99, because of the quasi magic importance that he attributes to the (completely unfounded) hypothesis that: *every theme or tagma had an even number of thousand men*.

There is another way to handle these figures. If a full-revenue soldier had an average property of 288 nomismata, one can postulate that a poor one, contributing half that amount, would have, as an average, half the above property and be supported by one zeugarion. It is hard to imagine a cavalry soldier poorer than that, as we know that those who became completely destitute, were removed from the regular cavalry and became irregulars ('rustlers', *apelatai*) or were assigned to garrisons as footsoldiers[27]. Moreover, we know what was considered the threshold to legal 'poverty', *aporia*: an immovable property worth less than 50 gold coins[28]. The soldiers without means of the *De Administrando* text should be placed, in my opinion, well above this level of legal poverty, supported by only one family, possibly –but not necessarily– possessing a *zeugarion*.

This being so, I would tend to estimate that for every contribution of 5 gold coins, one should count two *zeugaratoi* families and consequently that the Peloponnesian army was supported by ca 2.880 '*zeugaratoi* or the equivalent'.

The Peloponnesian aristocrats and their contributions

We turn now to the collection of horses. It is presented in the text as something resulting from a special arrangement made for the occasion; yet we know that it was the application of a routine fiscal practice, called the *monoprosopon*, i.e. a contribution exacted only from wealthy taxpayers– fiscal *prosopa*. Again in the accounts of the expedition against Crete of 911, we find an entry specifying that, to provide the army with the necessary horses, the government envisaged resorting to the collection of monoprosopa in the theme of the Anatolikoi (ἀπὸ ἐκθέσεως μονοπροσώπων ἐν τῷ θέματι τῶν ᾿Ανατολικῶν)[29]. Also, contributions in horses and mules were regularly exacted, as *sportulae*, from high state officials, metropolitans, archbishops and monasteries on the occasion of imperial campaigns, but the rates were different from those mentioned in our text[30].

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[26] *Supra*, p. 108 and *infra*, p. 122.

[27] LEMERLE, *Agrarian History*, 135. The term *apelates* has been recently commented upon by Lisa BÉNOU, Les apélates: Des rebelles ou des malfaiteurs? in: Marie Theres FÖGEN (ed.), *Ordnung und Aufruhr im Mittelalter*, Jus Commune, Sonderheft 70, Frankfurt 1995, 287-299.

[28] SVORONOS, *Les novelles*, 100. This is a traditional definition of poverty, *aporia*: see LEMERLE, *Agrarian History*, 99, note 1.

We have in this passage the list of the wealthy landowners of the Peloponnesos –of all the *prosopa* that were liable to participate to this contribution. One has the impression that this list must be exhaustive, as the *prosopa* that have not contributed are dutifully reported. Thus one must conclude that holders of higher titles, such as *patrikios* or *magistros*, did not exist then in the Peloponnesos: in any case, the top officers or administrators of the theme that are attested until the middle of the Xth c. have no higher title than the one of *protospatharios*[31].

In order to describe the lay aristocrats, our text enumerates the holders of titles called 'imperial' or 'of the retinue' (προελευσιμαῖοι), of military origin and having originally meant personal servants of the emperor: *protospatharioi, spatharokandidatoi, spatharioi* and *stratores*[32]. In this list are not included any holders of 'senatorial' titles (such as *dishypatos, hypatos, vestitor, silentiarios, apo eparchon*), no doubt because such dignitaries did not exist in the Peloponnesos[33]. Among the holders of imperial titles (i.e. *protospatharioi*, etc.) three categories, the *ploimoi*, the *konchyleutai* and the *chartopoioi*, were exempted from the obligation to provide horses. The reasons of this exception are not difficult to guess.

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[29] *De Cerimoniis* (Bonn), 658. For a general presentation of the obligation, see Hélène GLYGATZI-AHRWEILER, Recherches sur l'administration de l'empire byzantin aux IXe-XIe siècles, *BCH* 84, 1960, 5, note 7.

[30] *De Cerimoniis* (Bonn), 459-461 = J. HALDON, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions*, Vienna 1990, 98f.

[31] There is a sharp difference, on this point, with the situation on the eastern frontier, where we find, at approximately the same time, an Armenian chieftain, Melias, bearing the titles of *patrikios* (ca 916) and, later, of *magistros* (*De Administrando Imperio*, ch. 50, l. 162, 166). But the Peloponnesos, in spite of the threat of the Slavs, was rather well protected while the east lived in a context of constant war; the high titles came to Melias as a compensation for military exploits against the Arabs.

[32] The *protospatharioi, spatharokandidatoi, spatharioi* appear to be members of the provincial autorities in a document issued in 892 by Symbaticius, *strategos* of Macedonia, Thrace, Cephalonia and Longobardia: TRINCHERA, *Syllabus graecarum membranarum*, Naples 1865, n° 3.

(a) *Ploimoi* are men serving in the navy. We know that the Peloponnesos maintained in the Xth c. a flottilla of at least four warships (*chelandia*) that policed the sea[34]. It is obvious that the officers of the navy were not concerned by the campaign of the army in Italy and thus were not touched by the levy of horses.

(b) *Konchyleutai* are the purple-fishers. Such an occupation is normal for the shores of the Peloponnesos, known to produce purple since Antiquity. As the main, if not the only, consumer of purple was the palace and the imperial workshops, we can assume that the title holders, in whose properties purple fishing (or purple farming) was performed, had benefitted of a special exemption in their quality of furnishers of the court.

(c) *Chartopoioi* are in my opinion paper makers (or in the opinion of Jenkins, parchment makers). As an important consumer of paper was undoubtedly the imperial palace (the earliest known imperial documents are all written on paper), the *chartopoioi* could also be considered as furnishers of the court and benefit from the same exemption as the purple fishers[35].

Be that as it may, it seems certain that the title holders exempted from the levy of horses must not have been too many –taking into consideration their occupations, I would say, not more than a dozen.

Let us now turn to the census of the Peloponnesian aristocrats who actually gave horses.

1. We have two metropolitans, of Corinth and of Patras, who gave four horses each. This is the largest contribution attested, showing how economically important the metropolitans were. The bishops gave only two horses

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[33] N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles*, Paris 1972, 99 and note 57.

[34] N. Oikonomidès, Ὁ Βίος τοῦ ἁγίου Θεοδώρου Κυθήρων (10ος αἰ.), *Τρίτον Πανιόνιον Συνέδριον. Πρακτικά*, Athens 1967, 277.

[35] I have exposed how I understand these *chartopoioi* in: Le support matériel des documents byzantins, *La Paléographie grecque et byzantine*, Colloques internationaux du CNRS 559, Paris 1977, 395 ff.

each; they were probably eleven in the Peloponnesos at the time of the levy[36], so they have provided 22 horses. The hierarchy of the clergy provided a total of 30 horses.

2. Then come the *protospatharioi*, with three horses each. We do not know how many *protospatharioi* lived in Xth century Peloponnesos. But they must not have been very many. From another text of the *De Administrando Imperio*, which happens to date few years after the mandate of John Proteuon in the Peloponnesos, we can see that the *protospatharioi* were the cream of the local authorities[37] and collaborated directly with the strategos of the theme, who was also a *protospatharios*: when appointed strategos of the Peloponnesos, the *protospatharios* Bardas Platypodes, together with some local *protospatharioi* and other title holders, who were his partisans, provoked fierce quarrels and disputes and managed to expel from the Peloponnesos the *protospatharios* Leon Agelastos –quarrels that considerably weakened the defenses of the theme[38]. It is obvious that this was a case of political infight at the top of the Peloponnesian society: some *protospatharioi* gained the *strategos* on their side and sent to exile their opponent, another *protospatharios*, Leo Agelastos, who obviously had also his own partisans. Even if we assume that there may have also been some *protospatharioi* who remained neutral, their total number must have been very small –ten to twenty, in all and for all, probably less, certainly not more. Thus the *protospatharioi*, at the rate of 3 horses each, must have provided another 30-60 horses.

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[36] To estimate the number of bishops, I have used J. DARROUZÈS, *Notitiae episcopatuum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, Paris 1981. *Notitia* n° 7 (dated between 901-907) mentions five peloponnesian bishoprics for Corinth (Damalas, Argos, Monembasia, Zemaina, Maine), and six for Patras (Lakedaimonia, Methone, Korone, Bolaina, Moreas, Helos). *Notitia* n° 9 of the forties or fifties of the Xth century, adds Kythera to Corinth and omits Moreas from Patras. Both mention a total of 11 peloponnesian bishoprics for the two metropoleis.- We do not count here the island bishoprics of Zakynthos and Kephalonia, suffragan to Corinth, but belonging to the theme of Kephalonia.

[37] The very high social status of the protospatharioi in the Peloponnesos is also indirectly attested by Arethas: ARETHAE, *Scripta minora*, I, ed. L. G. WESTERINK, Leipzig 1968, 230.

[38] *De Administrando Imperio*, ch. 50, l. 54-66.

3. I assume also that the contribution of the utterly poor monasteries must not have been very substantial. I would guess, with no conviction, that they would not be accountable for more than 30 horses, which would mean that there were less than 60 utterly poor monasteries in the Peloponnesos.

The above figures, except for the one of the bishops, are arbitrary but cannot, I think, be very far from reality. The rest of the horses must have been provided by well-off monasteries or by *spatharokandidatoi* (2 horses each), or by *spatharioi* and *stratores* (1 horse each). We do not know how to break down that figure. If we say that the *spatharokandidatoi* were more than double the *protospatharioi*, and that the *spatharioi* and *stratores* were, each, more than double the *spatharokandidatoi*, we would have 20-40 *spatharokandidatoi* accounting for 40-80 horses, and 80-160 spatharioi and stratores accounting for an equal number of horses. In toto, the lay magnates and notables of the Peloponnesos would have provided 150-300 horses; if one adds the 30 horses of the bishops and another 30 of the poor monasteries, one arrives to the estimate that the Peloponnesos of the Xth c. must have had no less than 320 well-off monasteries. And this is a very high figure[39].

No matter. All this is arbitrary and each of the above figures is subject to change at a whim. But the total number is not, and this imposes a general and incontrovertible conclusion: in Xth century Peloponnesos, the lay or ecclesiastic aristocratic *prosopa* numbered anywhere between 500 and 1.000, according to my arbitrary calculations, they were ca 600. This figure, compared to the 1.500 of the whole thematic army, shows a relationship of 1 lay or ecclesiastic aristocrat to 2,5 *stratiotai*. This seems quite disproportionate, yet it is certainly close to reality.

What is even more important, is to estimate what the contributors of horses represented as economic power. We have seen that in our text there is a tendency to distribute the fiscal burden according to the contributor's wealth and, probably, possibilities. Now, we know that each horse had a considerable value in the Xth century. In the *Peri basilikon taxeidion*, it is specified that a horse (ἱππάριον) levied for the army was worth 12 nomismata[40]. Consequently, we can fairly say that the contribution of a horse was ca 2½ times heavier than the five nomismata given by a well-off *stratiotes*, 5 times heavier than the contribution of a poor *stratiotes.*

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[39] A first survey of monasticism in the mediaeval Peloponnesos is to be found in Anna LAMPROPOULOU, *'Ο ἀσκητισμὸς στὴν Πελοπόννησο κατὰ τὴν μέση βυζαντινὴ περίοδο*, Athens 1994.

Now, we have estimated *supra* that in order to keep his status, a poor *stratiotes* must have been himself a '*zeugaratos* or the equivalent,' that he worked with his family, and that the well-off *stratiotes* must have had double that. If we assumed that the fiscal burden was distributed with absolute equity and proportionately to the properties of the taxpayer, we should imagine that the Peloponnesian *prosopa*, lay and ecclesiastic, who provided 1.000 horses had an economic basis equivalent to at least 5.000 '*zeugaratoi* or the equivalent', certainly much more, since, as they were aristocrats, they had to rely on tenant workforce, i.e. on *paroikoi*, and did not work their land themselves.

I think that we can fairly go much further, if we keep in mind that the 'powerful' were undertaxed in comparison with the average taxpayer. This is openly said in the legislation of the Xth century[41]. But beyond this statement, we have some more precise information.

We shall not insist on the major athonite monasteries that we know from their archives, such as Lavra and Iviron. Already in the second half of the Xth c. they were mighty economic organizations and they became even more mighty in the XIth c. But even the occasional information that we have about Xth c. monasteries is quite impressive. The monastery of St. Andrew of Peristerai, that will later be absorbed by Lavra, possessed many domains and received in a single donation 100 *paroikoi*[42]. Things are even more impressive when looking at the institutions that were absorbed by the monastery of Iviron before 979/80: (a) The monastery of Abbakoum in Kassandra possessed 8.500 modioi of land plus several non measured domains. (b) The monastery of Leontia in Thessalonica, the domains of which were exempted from all extraordinary taxation and corvee, received the right to collect the taxes of 36 peasant households and possessed several non measured domains. (c) The monastery of Polygyros, founded and endowed by the *protospatharios* Demetrios Pteleotes, was also exempted from all extraordinary taxation and corvee, had received a gift of 20 *paroikoi*, and possessed three domains measuring 50.000, 700, and 4.500 modioi respectively. (d) The monastery of Kolovou possessed more than 5.500 modioi of land in Hierissos and another 9.000 modioi in the Strymon region.

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[40] *De Cerimoniis* (Bonn), 459 = HALDON, *Three Treatises*, 98.

[41] E.g. cf. SVORONOS, *Les novelles*, 85 (n° 3, l. 69 ff): The many small taxpayers guarantee the payment of the fiscal revenue and provide the necessary soldiers; all this is due to disappear, if the properties pass to the hands of the 'powerful'.

[42] *Actes de Lavra* I, ed. P. LEMERLE, A. GUILLOU, N. SVORONOS, Denise PAPACHRYSSANTHOU, Paris 1970, 58.

There is no reason to bring more examples. It is clear that Xth c. well-off monasteries were wealthy institutions, worth many times the properties that were considered as normal for one *strateia*.

What about lay aristocrats? For the *protospatharioi*, we already have an idea with the properties that Demetrios Pteleotes gave to the monastery that he founded (*supra*, c). We also know some details about the estates of the *protospatharios* Eustathios Boilas, who wrote his will somewhere at the eastern frontier of the empire in 1059. He was quite wealthy: he possessed a considerable number of domains, the total value of which is unknown. We know the value of only one part of his real estate, the part that he gave as dowry to his two daughters and as an endowment to his church of the Virgin tou Salem: this part was worth 70 pounds of gold (5.040 gold coins). Here again this partial figure is a far cry from the 288 coins of the property of soldiers (17.5 times more). Now, to this one should add the value of his other domains and of his numerous slaves[43]. It is clear that the *protospatharios* Boilas, who lived at a time when the prestige of his title had diminished considerably compared to what it was in the IXth and Xth c., was worth manyfold what regular cavalry soldiers were. It is only natural that such important landowners needed to employ *kouratores* to ensure the proper administration of their properties[44]. Also, such extensive proprerties ensured for them a very substantial income, certainly much higher than the yearly roga that they received from the emperor (72 nomismata for a *protospatharios*). We do not know how Boilas' wealth was created, but we know for sure that in 1059 it was invested on landed property almost exclusively[45].

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[43] P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin*, Paris 1977, 15-63.

[44] V. Laurent, *La Vie merveilleuse de Saint Pierre d'Atroa*, Brussels 1956, 177.

Moreover, the activity of IXth-XIth c. dynatoi as patrons of art in the provinces, shows that a real gap separated them from the well-off soldiers. *Protospatharioi* were the founders of such churches as Skripou in Boeotia (874)[46], the church of Vesaina in Thessaly (Xth c.)[47], the Panagia ton Chalkeon of Thessalonica (1028)[48], the Karabaş Kilise in Cappadocia (1060)[49], all major foundations, requiring large outlays of cash. A *spatharokandidatos* was the founder of Hagioi Theodoroi at Athens (1049)[50], and the church of St. Gregory in Thebes was the work of a *kandidatos* (872)[51], a dignitary of lower rank than those mentioned in the text concerning the levy of horses. A *droungarios*, thematic officer without any honorific title, was the founder of St. John Mangoutis in Athens (871)[52].

It is obvious that all these title holders fared at an economic level much higher than what would suggest their contribution to the levy of horses. The *protospatharioi*, providing 3 horses each, incurred the equivalent of a total expenditure of 36 nomismata, the *spatharokandidatoi* the equivalent of 24 nomismata, the *spatharioi* and *stratores* 12 nomismata. An expenditure similar in value would have been undertaken by soldiers supported by 15 or 10 or 5 '*zeugaratoi* or the equivalent' farmer units. But this is of course unrealistically low, especially if one thinks that these gentlemen provided real horses and consequently were expected to have quite large stables in order to be able to give away 1-3 animals.

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[45] I have tried to show elsewhere that investment in real estate was the best opportunity offered to the Byzantine aristocrats, who were excluded by law from all commercial transactions. See N. OIKONOMIDÈS, Ἡ ἐπένδυση σὲ ἀκίνητα γύρω στὸ ἔτος 1000, *Τὰ Ἱστορικὰ* 7, 1987, 15-26.

[46] N. OIKONOMIDÈS, Pour une nouvelle lecture des inscriptions de Skripou en Béotie, *TM* 12, 1994, 479-493.

[47] Anna AVRAMÉA, Inventaires en vue d'un recueil des inscriptions historiques de Byzance IV. Inscriptions de Thessalie, *TM* 10, 1987, 368-369.

[48] J.-M. SPIESER, Inventaires en vue d'un recueil des inscriptions historiques de Byzance I. Les inscriptions de Thessalonique, *TM* 5, 1973, 163, 164.

[49] G. de JÉRPHANION, *Les églises rupestres de Cappadoce* II, Paris 1942, 334.

[50] V. LAURENT, Nicolas Kalomalos et l'église des Saints Théodore à Athènes, *Ἑλληνικά* 7, 1934, 72-82.

[51] G. A. SOTIRIOU, Ὁ ἐν Θήβαις βυζαντινὸς ναὸς Γρηγορίου τοῦ Θεολόγου, *Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐφημερίς* 1924, 1-26.

[52] A. XYNGOPOULOS, *Εὑρετήριον τῶν μεσαιωνικῶν μνημείων 1. Ἀθηνῶν*, fasc. 2, Athens 1929, fig. 88. A certain Nicholas Droungarios (or droungarios?) founded a church in Kerkyra in 1074/5; because of the date, the editor of the inscription considers the word droungarios to be a family name; this is probable, but not sure; Cf. P. VOCOTOPOULOS, in: *CA* 21, 1971, 152-153.

We turn again to guesswork. Taking into consideration all the above parallels, I think that a very conservative estimate would be that the properties of the lay or ecclesiastic aristocrats of the Peloponnesos must have been, as an average, at least three times more important than the value of their contribution would indicate. Which would mean that the Peloponnesian *prosopa* must have been supported by paroikoi who numbered at least 15.000 '*zeugaratoi* or the equivalent', may be considerably more.

This means that in Xth century Peloponnesos, the total value of land possessed by the *prosopa*, and the total number of dependent peasants that worked for them, were at least five times larger than those of the Peloponnesian army[53]. It can also be considered as probable that the number of monks (say, ten per affluent monastery) was considerably higher than that of the soldiers -but no figures can be proposed in this respect because of the hypothetical and very fragile character of all our calculations[54].

There are some sectors of the population that remain completely out of the above picture: the farmers who owned their land but had nothing to do with the military, the free landowners; and the *paroikoi* who rented land from the fiscus, either as *paroikoi* of the demosion, or as *paroikoi* of imperial domains, such as the various *episkepseis* or *kouratoreiai*. It is probable that the first group was more important than all the others but no closer estimates are possible.

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[53] The dramatic increase of dependent peasantry is also reflected in the legislation. See Helga KÖPSTEIN, Zur Veränderung der Agrarverhältnisse in Byzanz vom 6. zum 10. Jh., in: Helga KÖPSTEIN (ed.), *Besonderheiten der byzantinischen Feudalentwicklung*, Berlin 1983, 69-76.

[54] J. Lefort has already pointed to the considerable importance of monastic real estate in the Xth century: J. LEFORT, N. OIKONOMIDÈS, Denise PAPACHRYSSANTHOU, *Actes d'Iviron* I, Paris 1985, 31.

Thus we realize that in mid-Xth c. Peloponnesos, the dependent peasants working on domains of local magnates were much more numerous than the free peasants who served in the army and those who supported them. The number of the *paroikoi* was certainly very important in Xth c. Peloponnesos. The system of small landownership was largely corroded, and it will be even more corroded in the late-Xth c., when, official complaints appear about the metropolis of Patras, which had taken over the properties of many soldiers and prejudiced all the region's *penetes*[55].

Comparison with the Thrakesion

It is useful to compare the above calculations with what we know of the army of the Thrakesion in 949, at a date reasonably close to ours[56]. We have seen that the Thrakesion had then 800 stratiotai, out of whom 13.5% were indigent. There were another 150 officers and professional soldiers and 600 Armenian soldiers guarding the coastline (the Armenians of Priene? or an imported contingent?). This makes a total army 1.550 strong, a figure quite close to the figure that we proposed for the Peloponnesos[57]. But this number breaks down quite differently, since only half of the Thrakesion was made up of soldier-farmers, the rest being filled up with professionals, members of a poor (or imported) minority.

It is certain that the Thrakesion, with its several alluvial plains, was by far more fertile than the hilly Peloponnesos. So one must reject right away the idea that this difference in the number of soldier farmers might be due to a difference in population or to a less efficient implantation of the institution of military holdings. On the contrary, one has every reason to believe that the Thrakesion was more populated than the Peloponnesos, and at least equally well organized. But we know that the Thrakesion, because of its fertility, was the region par excellence, where wealthy Constantinopolitans and wealthy Constantinopolitan and other institutions had their properties.

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[55] *Epistoliers byzantins du Xe siècle*, ed. J. DARROUZÈS, Paris 1960, 102.

[56] *De Cerimoniis* (Bonn), 666-667.

[57] The strength of the various Byzantine provincial armies that are mentioned here seem to me by far more reliable (because based on Byzantine technical texts) and also more realistic than those provided by the Arabic sources and taken at face value by W. TREADGOLD, Notes on the Numbers and Organization of the Ninth-Century Byzantine Army, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 21, 1980, 269-288 and IDEM, The Army (above, note 8).

This being so, there is another explanation to be proposed for this discrepancy. The social evolution being more advanced in the Thrakesion than in the poorer Peloponnesos, the corrosion of the small landownership system was much more advanced. One third or half the soldier farmers of the Thrakesion had already been transformed into paroikoi and had to be replaced by mercenaries on a permanent basis in order to guarantee the security of the theme. And if this was so for the soldiers, one must assume that it was so for all small landowners. One has the impression that in the Thrakesion the *paroikoi* must have constituted the majority of the population.

Conclusion

The texts of Constantine Porphyrogennetos provide us with snapshots of the social composition of two provinces at a time coinciding with the development of the imperial legislation meant to protect the small landowners from the greedy powerful. If the calculations contained in this paper are correct, one can say that in the Xth c. the free small landowners were on the way of becoming –if they had not already become– a minority in the Byzantine countryside. In other words, when the legislation to protect them started being issued, it was too late to legislate. One can understand better the concern of Romanos I in 934 about the need for 'military contributions' and the gloomy comment of Constantine VII (947?) about the 'army being sick'[58]. The structure of the provincial society, including the military, had already irrevocably changed; the legislation was a desperate rearguard action.

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[58] SVORONOS, *Les novelles*, 85 (n° 3), 118 (n° 5).

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XVII

Title and Income at the Byzantine Court

When speaking of titles, one thinks automatically of the aristocracy, if not of the nobility. But any distinguished social position should normally be accompanied by wealth and all its external signs: an adequate mansion, the appropriate dress, servants, lifestyle, and power. All members of the imperial court needed a large income, but the nature of this income, and the way in which it was obtained, changed radically from the time of the Macedonian dynasty of the ninth to tenth century to that of the Komnenoi of the twelfth, together with the mentality and the social structure. This study outlines these changes and proposes an interpretation,[1] a monetarist interpretation, thus inevitably a partial one. The basic premise is that in the eleventh century Byzantium underwent a period of shortage of precious metal because its needs increased while the supply remained practically unchanged.

(a) In spite of what Psellos says about the wealth accumulated by Basil II in 1025 (14.5 million gold coins), and in spite of the information concerning massive hoarding on the part of some ecclesiastical authorities,[2] Byzantium was then coming out of a thirty-five-year war with Bulgaria and had annexed that country, which had not yet known a monetized economy (the entire treasure of the Bulgarian tsar is said to have amounted to no more than 720,000 coins).[3] The new territories had been left to function on a financial system based on barter, but when, in the 1030s, taxes were required to be paid in cash, the Bulgarians joined the revolt of Peter Deljan.[4] It is clear that, with the conquest, the population of the empire had increased considerably, that the money economy prevailing elsewhere had started making inroads into the new territories, but that these were not monetized as fast as the Byzantine administration would have liked them to be.

(b) On the other hand, the eleventh and the twelfth centuries were periods of remarkable economic expansion, in Byzantium[5] as well as in the rest of Europe. This tendency was not seriously affected by the fall of Asia Minor to the Turks as, after the First Crusade, Byzantium recovered the control of the economically significant lowlands and

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[1] I am grateful to Professor Angeliki Laiou for reading a draft of this paper and for commenting on it.

[2] Ioannes Skylitzes, ed. I. Thurn (Berlin, 1973), 402, 429: 231,000 nomismata hoarded by the metropolitan of Thessalonica, and 180,000 by Patriarch Alexios Stoudites.

[3] M. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c. 300–1450* (Cambridge, 1985), 225.

[4] Skylitzes, 412.

[5] A. Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire, 900–1200* (Cambridge, 1989).

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shores, limiting the invaders to parts of the Anatolian plateau. This expansion would automatically mean the necessity for higher levels of liquidity, in order to avoid resorting to the less flexible and more cumbersome process of barter and the inevitable reduction of the volume of exchanges.

Now, an increase in population and an increase in the volume of transactions not accompanied by any change in the credit and banking system inevitably creates the need for larger quantities of coined money to operate an economy such as the Byzantine one. And, as far as we can tell, there were no substantial new sources of precious metal—or, even if there was some new gold, it was certainly not enough for the ever-developing economy.[6] The Byzantine state had to face this reality and, being a very centralized organization, had to propose solutions, without necessarily having achieved high levels of economic thinking.

In what follows, and because of the nature of our sources, I focus on public finances and not on the economy as a whole, except to the degree in which it was affected by financial and monetary policies. Moreover, Byzantium was a centralized state, exercising control over all aspects of life, and its finances could not but reflect other, more general economic trends. The imperial finances largely regulated the circulation of coined money through the dialectical process of levying the state's share at the same time as compensating for services to the state. Public expenditure is thus at the center of our attention here.

In a medieval state, the two main consumers of public funds are the administration and the army, both headed by members of the aristocracy. Consequently the income of this aristocracy, although a relatively small percentage of the overall budget, is significant for our purposes, as it indicates the basic trends of the financial policies of the state. Moreover, we have some sources to study it and to evaluate its importance and repercussions on the economy and on society in general. The upper class was the model: some of its members and some who aspired to become its members certainly thought, already in these times, that what was good for the upper class was good for the whole empire.

The Macedonian aristocracy was financed by the emperor mainly through salaries in cash, the famous *roga*. On 24 March 950, Palm Sunday, Liutprand, the bishop of Cremona, attended the distribution of the yearly salaries to imperial officials in Constantinople.[7] In the large dining hall of the Nineteen Tables in the Great Palace, which normally seated 228 guests, Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos took his place behind an enormous head table covered with bags of gold coins and heaps of precious silk garments called *skaramangia*. Then the officials who filled the hall were invited to the table according to their rank, and received their yearly salary from the emperor's hand. First came the rector, the top official not belonging to the imperial family;[8] he received four *skaramangia* and an unspecified quantity of gold, the total being so heavy that he had to carry it on his shoulders, not in his hands. Then came the *domestikos* of the Schools (the general in chief of the Byzantine army) and the *droungarios* of the *ploimoi* (the chief admiral); they received even more, so much so that they had to get some help in order to drag the bags with their salaries behind them out of the room. Then, following the hierarchical order, came the *magistroi,* each of whom received 24 pounds of gold coins[9] (1,728 pieces of gold, weighing 7.68 kg) and two *skaramangia*. Then came the *patrikioi* with half of the above, then officials of lower grade who received smaller amounts, down to those who were limited to one pound of gold (72 pieces, of a total weight of 320 grams of gold).

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[6] Charles Brand kindly draws my attention to the fact that new African gold is said to have been brought into Byzantium by the end of the 11th century, allowing the coinage reform of Alexios I Komnenos (P. Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe* [Cambridge, 1988], 168). But one has to keep in mind that the economic expansion persisted in the 12th century, constantly increasing the need of coined money.

[7] Liutprand, *Antapodosis*, VI, 10.

This was what the emperor himself distributed. Those entitled to less than one pound received their salaries from a palatine official, the *parakoimomenos,* on subsequent days. The whole distribution was completed before Easter Sunday.

It is probable that what Liutprand writes contains inaccuracies, that he may not have understood all the intricacies of the Byzantine court system and the criteria according to which the amounts of the salaries were established. But the basic description is certainly very vivid and essentially correct: more important, the figures he quotes may be inaccurate but are not exaggerated.

Several Byzantine texts[10] confirm that the yearly salaries were distributed by the emperor himself, "with his own hands," in an act that stressed the personal relationship between the sovereign and his officials, and the complete dependency of the latter on the former. The emperor seems to have had full powers over the *roga*: he had to find ways to meet this yearly obligation (including, if necessary, melting gold objects from the palace);[11] he could lessen its amount[12] or arbitrarily withhold it altogether;[13] he could also increase it in order to please his officials or to please a specific individual.[14] The distribution of cash and precious garments (that were as good and as prestigious as cash, and interchangeable with it)[15] regularly occurred during the week before Easter.

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[8] It seems, though, that the rector of the year 950 was Michael Lakapenos, the son of the deceased emperor Romanos Lakapenos. See R. Guilland, *Recherches sur les institutions de Byzance,* vol. II (Berlin-Amsterdam, 1967), 214.

[9] In spite of the existing uncertainties (Hendy, *Studies,* 337–38), I consider that the Byzantine pound (litra) weighed 320 grams.

[10] *Ecloga,* ed. L. Burgmann (Frankfurt, 1983), 224; Theophanes Continuatus, Bonn ed., 173, 259, 265; Zepos, *Jus,* I, 227, 623: *Νέος Ἑλλ.* 19 (1925), 154, 159; Leo the Deacon, Bonn ed., 100; Ioannes Scylitzes, 390, 483; E. Kurtz, *Die Gedichte des Christophoros Mitylenaios* (Leipzig, 1903), no. 8; Michael Attaliates, Bonn ed., 122, 142; Skylitzes Continuatus, ed. E. Tsolakes (Thessalonike, 1968), 133, 142; Anna Comnena, *Alexiade,* ed. B. Leib (Paris, 1937–76), I, 133–34.

[11] Theophanes Continuatus, 173.

[12] Michael Attaleiates, 60–61; Skylitzes Continuatus, 104; cf. Zepos, *Jus,* I, 638 (a diminished *roga* of 24 [instead of 72] nom. paid together with the *protospatharioi*); Nicephoros Bryennios, ed. P. Gautier, 258–59; Ioannes Zonaras, Bonn ed., 732–33.

[13] *Peira* of Eustathios Romaios (in Zepos, *Jus,* IV), 17.14.

[14] Leo the Deacon, 100: προῖκα τὴν ρόγαν ἐπηύξησεν; Nicholas I, Patriarch of Constantinople, *Letters,* ed. R.J.H. Jenkins and L. G. Westerink (Washington, D.C., 1973), 362; Kekaumenos, *Sovety i rasskazy,* ed. G. G. Litavrin (Moscow, 1972), 266.

In the Macedonian court system, salaries were paid to the top public servants as well as to holders of honorific titles. Public service provided a salary for as long as the individual held an office; honorific titles and their salaries were for life. As we shall see, there was more to these salaries than simply buying services and favors for the emperor. They had an important economic function and considerable repercussions on the social structure.

Salaries Paid for Services to the State

We shall ignore here the way in which some civil servants were paid—directly from the citizens who used their services. This practice is constantly attested throughout the Middle Ages and guaranteed substantial incomes; but these were low-level positions that had to be bought for a considerable price.[16]

In order to control corruption, the Isaurian emperors' puritanical reforms introduced, in the eighth century, the general principle that the top officials in each service were expected to receive from the imperial treasury a very important salary, so that they would be completely immune to external influence and able to inspire proper behavior in their subordinates.[17] This system of salaried top officials survived intact from the eighth through the eleventh century.

We know with relative precision which elements constituted the salary of a Macedonian high official thanks to the law (novel) of Constantine IX Monomachos issued ca. 1047 for the creation of the position of *nomophylax* (the law professor at Constantinople). After defining his position in the Senate and in the court hierarchy ("he will sit right after the *epi ton kriseon*," ἕξει δὲ καθέδραν εὐθὺς μετὰ τὸν ἐπὶ τῶν κρίσεων), and his right to visit the palace on specific days, the emperor added: "he will receive every year from my hand a salary of 4 pounds and one silk garment and one *baïon*, and he will have such and such food supplies" (καὶ ρόγαν ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος λήψεται ἐκ ἡμετέρων χειρῶν λίτρας τέσσαρας καὶ βλαττίον καὶ βαΐον, σιτηρεσίων δὲ χάριν ἕξει τάδε καὶ τάδε).[18]

The income is divided into two parts: (a) the salary and the other high value objects that accompany it, which are given to the official by the emperor himself, and (b) the food supplies, which he received from someone else, no doubt the fisc. The same division appears in a tenth-century novel saying that the judges received (a salary) "from the emperor's hand" and a *prosodion* (a subsistence allowance in kind).[19] It seems that this compensation in kind was relatively unimportant: for example, the imperial secretaries (*asekretai*), were entitled to 2 modioi (i.e., ca. 25 kg) of wheat per month or ca. 833 grams per day, a quantity sufficient to feed one person, and which corresponded to an additional revenue of not more than 2 gold coins per year.[20]

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[15] Silk garments were added to the *roga* when the emperor was short of gold. Cf. Skylitzes Continuatus, ed. Tsolakes, 142: οὐ διὰ χρυσίου πᾶσαν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐνδέον σηρικοῖς ὑφάσμασιν ἀναπληρωσάμενος; or gold was added to cover a deficiency in silk garments: *De Cerimoniis aulae byzantinae,* Bonn ed., 668–69.

[16] P. Lemerle, "*Roga* et rente d'état," *REB* 25 (1967), 81: the payments varied from 20 (notary of the *stratiotikon*) to 64 pounds (chartulary of the *genikon*); if we suppose that these officials had a yearly income of 300 nomismata (and in fact they probably had much more, as they were fiscal officials), this would represent an annual yield of 6–20 percent of the invested capital.

[17] *Ecloga,* ed. Burgmann, 166.

[18] Zepos, *Jus,* I, 623 = A. Salač, *Novella Constitutio saec. XI medii* (Prague, 1954), 25.

The main revenue of the *nomophylax* was what he received from the emperor's hand: 4 pounds of gold, 288 gold coins weighing ca. 1,280 grams; only one silk garment; and a *baïon,* literally a "palm branch," an object the nature of which Theodore Balsamon did not know in the late twelfth century.[21] Balsamon supposed that it might have been a palm branch made of a precious metal such as gold or silver. At any rate, we know that in the ninth to tenth century the emperor distributed on Palm Sunday to his officials real palm branches decorated with flowers and accompanied, according to the rank, by precious silver crosses or crosslets. Thus the *baïon* was a symbolic gift of a certain value.[22]

What other figures do we know relevant to the salaries of high court officials? There is a famous text, the tariff of the salaries of the *strategoi* and *kleisourarchai,* that is, of all high provincial commanders, which dates from the year 911–912.[23] Those of Asia Minor and of Thrace and Macedonia (the provinces that traditionally had belonged to the Late Roman *praefectura praetorio per Orientem*) received salaries that varied from 40 pounds for the *strategoi* of the Anatolikoi, Armeniakoi, and Thrakesioi, to 30 pounds for those of Opsikion, Boukellarioi, and Macedonia, to 20 for most of the others, except for those of the maritime themes who received 10 pounds and the *kleisourarchai* who received 5 pounds. It is interesting to note that the amounts of the salaries do not always follow the hierarchical order of their recipients.

There is no reason to doubt the veracity of these figures because they compare well with some other scarce information that we have. For example, the position of *strategos* of Taron, newly created in the early tenth century, was endowed with an annual salary of 20 pounds.[24] Also we know that the *roga* of the *hypertimos* in 1082 amounted to 20 pounds of (debased?) gold,[25] and that the salaries of judges under Andronikos I (1183–

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[19] Zepos, *Jus,* I, 227 (945–959).

[20] Symeon Magister, Bonn ed., 673. I assume that we have here the *thalassios modios* (12.8 kg) and not the Constantinopolitan one (234 kg), which would yield unrealistically high quantities of grain to feed one household.

[21] Theodore Balsamon in G. Rhalles and M. Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων,* vol. IV (Athens, 1854), 523–29.

[22] *De cer.,* 170; N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe s.* (Paris, 1972), 197, cf. 217.

[23] *De cer.,* 696–97.

[24] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio,* ed. G. Moravcsik and R.J.H. Jenkins, chap. 43, lines 68–69. It must be noted, though, that as the *strategos* was also a *magistros,* it is not clear whether the 20 litrai were the salary corresponding to the position of *strategos* or to the title of *magistros.* The latter point of view in Lemerle, "*Roga,*" 83–84.

[25] Zepos, *Jus,* I, 369.

85) amounted to 40 or 80 pounds of "silver" (a gold/silver alloy?), an amount said to correspond to 13–26 pounds of gold.[26]

The salaries of the *strategoi* represent very considerable amounts, ranging from 12,800 grams to 1,600 grams of gold, which, together with the information about the *nomophylax* (being a professor, he was naturally paid less), confirms that Liutprand's figures were not exaggerated: after all, almost 13 kg of gold plus some very heavy garments constituted a considerable weight and anyone might need some help carrying them around.

This was not the only kind of income that the *strategoi* had. One of them, the *strategos* of Mesopotamia, did not receive any salary because he collected all the *kommerkion* of his province, while another one, the *strategos* of Chaldia, who lived in Trebizond, received only 10 litrai from the emperor "because he received another 10 litrai from the *kommerkion* [of his province]." Those were the two main entrances for oriental trade by land into the empire. For Mesopotamia we know that already in the ninth century there was a *strategos,* who had a seal of the same type as those of the *kommerkiarioi*[27]—a detail that shows that the administrative unit was from the beginning conceived as a fiscal unit.

Lastly, the *strategoi* of the Balkan themes to the west of the Strymon did not receive any salary, because they collected gratuities (*synetheiai*) from their own themes. We have no idea of the cumulative importance of these gratuities, but we assume that the western *strategoi* collected sums similar to those of their eastern colleagues. And, more important, they collected them directly from the taxpayer, without burdening the imperial budget. These were an extra burden for the Balkan populations, but undoubtedly not a very significant one.[28]

The *strategoi* received high salaries but also incurred heavy expenses.[29] They had to provide for their personal guard and for their personal administrative office, which were clearly distinguished from the military and administrative organization of the province. In 949 the personal suite (*proeleusis*) of the *strategos* of the Thrakesion (one of the best paid, according to the tariff) included at least two administrative assistants (*protomandator, protokankellarios*), his personal standard-bearer (*protobandophoros*), twelve [mounted] noncommissioned officers (*protodomestikoi, protokentarchoi*), and a hundred foot soldiers.[30] The salaries of these men would presumably eat up half the *strategos'* income. To this, one should add his numerous servants and the maintenance of his mansion. The *strategos* was quite an important lord inside his territories, with a retinue more important than that of other aristocrats, who all seem to have been surrounded by "their men."[31]

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[26] Nicetas Choniates, *Historia,* ed. J. van Dieten (Berlin-New York, 1975), 330; cf. J.-C. Cheynet, E. Malamut, and C. Morrisson, "Prix et salaires à Byzance," in *Hommes et richesses dans l'empire byzantin,* vol. II (Paris, 1991), 370.

[27] W. Brandes, "Überlegungen zur Vorgeschichte des Thema Mesopotamien," *Byzantinoslavica* 44.2 (1983), 171–77.

[28] We have no figures for the Byzantine population. But we can assume with some certainty that in the 10th century the Peloponnesos had approximately 1,500 military households (*De administrando imperio,* chap. 52; N. Oikonomides, "The Social Structure of the Byzantine Countryside in the First Half of the Xth Century," *Symmeikta* 10 [1996], 114–15, and, with a different estimate, A. Bon, *Le Péloponnèse byzantin jusqu'en 1204* [Paris, 1951], 115). It is not impossible that the nonmilitary population was several times that figure. Consequently, putting together an amount of, say, 20 pounds (1,440 nom.) would need less than 1/10 of a nomisma per household.

[29] Cf. Cheynet et al., "Prix et salaires," 367.

[30] *De cer.,* 663.

Salaries Paid to High Dignitaries

The honorific titles that defined one's place in society and one's degree of familiarity with the emperor also brought a yearly income, a salary or pension often related to an investment. The system has been studied by Paul Lemerle.[32] By investing a considerable amount of money in the state, an individual, approved by the emperor, could obtain a title with a yearly salary (*roga*) proportionate to his payment, with an annual yield of 2.31–3.47 percent of the invested capital, well below the usual interest rate of 6 percent. The yield was very poor, the more so because the capital paid was lost forever to the profit of the state—and became even worse when emperors such as Nikephoros Phokas temporarily diminished the amounts distributed to the senators.[33] Consequently this investment, at least at the moment when it was agreed upon, should not be studied as an economic venture; but it was accompanied by the acquisition of a title and eventually with participation in the Senate. This not only flattered one's vanity but also provided one with substantial social advantages that cannot be evaluated in money. What was closer to an economic venture was the possibility, under certain conditions, to increase the *roga* by supplementary payments at the rate of 9.72 percent, which was higher than the normal interest rate. But here again, the capital was lost forever, and consequently the economic profitability of the scheme could be questioned, although we know that many Byzantines subscribed to it. The economic arrangement would become more palatable with time and with the promotions or *roga* increases that the emperor distributed on festive days.

What is certain is that with this system the state was collecting back from its aristocrats part of their income. It must be stressed, though, that these payments to the state are attested only for certain titles, those called "imperial" and designating initially personal servants or bodyguards of the emperor: *mandator* (courier), *strator* (squire), *kandidatos, spatharios, spatharokandidatos, protospatharios* (bodyguards), the last of which opened to the individual the prestigious doors of the Senate. No such payment is attested for the higher dignities of *patrikios, anthypatos, magistros, vestes, vestarches,* and *proedros,* which might mean that these dignities were either given without initial investment, "for free," or after specific negotiation. Be that as it may, they were also accompanied by even higher salaries, the actual payment of which is clearly and repeatedly attested by the sources,[34] but the amount of which is not: the *magistros* Niketas (10th century) received a *roga* because someone intervened in his favor with the emperor,[35] and Psellos speaks of a "poor" *patrikios,*[36] no doubt one who had not negotiated a substantial *roga* at the time of his nomination. In other words, I think that efforts to guess the exact amounts of the salaries of the higher dignities are futile.

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[31] H. G. Beck, *Byzantinisches Gefolgschaftswesen,* Sitzungsberichte der bayer. Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil-hist. Klasse (1965).

[32] Lemerle, "*Roga.*"

[33] Skylitzes, 274; Zonaras, 504–5.

[34] Apart from Liutprand, who speaks of the salaries of the *magistroi* and the *patrikioi,* cf. the following notes as well as the texts mentioning the loss of the *roga* of a *magistros* and of a *kouropalates* because the individual entered the monastery and lost the title and the *roga* (*Νέος Ἑλλ.* 19 [1925], 159; Michaelis Pselli, *Scripta minora,* ed. G. Kurtz and F. Drexl, vol. II [Milan, 1941], 92).

The System

As is normal, the top administrative positions were usually occupied by individuals who already had high honorific titles; high titles were bestowed upon successful administrators and officers. The two salaries could be cumulated. And the result could be people (and, after them, families) with a very high yearly revenue in ready cash.

One should add that this revenue increased thanks to all kinds of tips and gratuities to which imperial officials were entitled: for example, they regularly received a gratuity from any new colleague—but as they also had paid such gratuities at their nomination, this revenue could be considered as a compensation for an already incurred expense. They benefited more substantially from the promotions or the increases of salary that the emperor usually distributed on festive occasions (almost always at his coronation) or in order to reward acts of valor. They also benefited from the ritual gifts the emperor made to his officials in order to increase their motivation before an important operation such as a military campaign: the *Book of Ceremonies* mentions the cash carried by the emperor while on campaign in order to make gifts to distinguished soldiers as well as the detailed description of the precious or less precious garments that an emperor should distribute, according to rank, to the officers of the thematic army when they prepared for a campaign.[37] Such gifts were called φιλοτιμίαι, gifts destined to kindle the officials' ambitions. Their amount was not fixed in advance, and consequently they were not part of the regular pay of the officials. But they were repeated with some regularity and thus constituted a substantial addition to one's regular income.

Emperor Basil II speaks of those who become wealthy and powerful in these terms:[38] the powerful man will keep his wealth for a long time and transmit it to his successors. If perchance he is a *patrikios,* he will transmit his power to his descendants; if perchance he is a *magistros* and *domestikos* of the Schools, his successors will be powerful, will enter the imperial entourage, and will extend their well-being for seventy or a hundred years. It is clear that in the eyes of this emperor material wealth was above all the result of high titles and high administrative positions.

It is a characteristic of Byzantium that in all times—and in the Macedonian period more than in others—extreme wealth came mainly from service to the state, not from business. In other words, wealth was intricately bound up with titles and imperial salaries. And there were specific rules concerning the ways in which wealth could be used or invested on the part of an aristocrat: he was not allowed to participate in trades and crafts; he was not allowed any interest rate beyond 4 percent. Consequently aristocrats were obliged to invest their surplus in real estate, that is, houses in town or fields in the countryside. The return on such investments seems to have hovered above 5–6 percent every year.[39] Thus imperial salaries ended up by creating an aristocracy of landowners—the same aristocracy that the tenth-century emperors tried to contain with the well-known rural legislation.

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[35] *Νέος Ἑλλ.* 19 (1925), 154.

[36] K. Sathas, ***Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη***, vol. V (Venice, 1876), 38.

[37] *De cer.*, I, 417, 486.

[38] Zepos, *Jus*, I, 264.

In this tenth-century system, the state, by distributing titles and salaries, was providing the emperor's men membership in the aristocracy and the necessary material means. It was creating a clientele relationship between the emperor and the official (who received his salary from the emperor's hand), and between the official and his men, who benefited from the further distribution of this salary: a pyramidal structure, the kernel of significant further developments. But all was under the direct control of the emperor, and salaries were guaranteed only for a certain time or, at best, for life.

The state appears as the main motor that puts money into circulation and collects it back through taxation. This system could function only if considerable quantities of coined money were accumulated and kept inactive for long periods, from the time of tax collection (September and March) to the distribution of salaries (Easter for the officials and summer for the campaigning armies). This would be called, by some, a command economy.

The Eleventh-Century Crisis

The eleventh century experienced an acute economic and social crisis, one expression of which was a manifest shortage of gold: the Byzantine nomisma was devalued several times, beginning in the reign of Michael IV in the 1030s. According to the tempting—but not universally accepted—interpretation of Cécile Morrisson, initially these were devaluations of expansion due to the increase of the volume of exchanges. The same phenomenon appears in Italy at the same time. Later, in the 1070s, we have crisis devaluations that will cause the collapse of the Middle Byzantine numismatic system.[40]

The first manifestation of what I take to be the gold shortage appeared in the early eleventh century. The maximum allowed rates of interest increased by almost 39 percent in Byzantium, the basic one passing from 6 percent to 8.33 percent, the others following proportionately. In a revived, active money economy, interest rates may have fluctuated and certainly increased because of increased demand for cash, a situation echoed by other sources of the time, including Kekaumenos.[41]

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[39] Cf. the calculations proposed in my article Ἡ ἐπένδυση σὲ ἀκίνητα γύρω στὸ ἔτος 1000, *Τὰ Ἱστορικά* 7 (1987), 15–26. Another calculation can be made, based on the fact that (a) the rent (*pakton*) of first-class land was 1 nomisma per 10 modioi, while (b) its price was 1 modios per nomisma, and (c) the whole tax should correspond to 1/24 of the landowner's revenue: a land of, say, 240 modioi of the first class, worth 240 nomismata, provides its owner with a gross revenue of 24 nom. per year as *pakton*; minus 10 nom. for his taxes, he is left with 14 nom. of profit, which corresponds to 5.83 percent of the invested capital.

[40] C. Morrisson, "La dévaluation de la monnaie byzantine au XIe siècle: Essai d'interprétation," *TM* 6 (1976), 3–48; cf. P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 285, 307 ff. This interpretation has been challenged by Hendy, *Studies*, 236, who thinks that both devaluations are due to the same reason (budgetary imbalance), and that the difference between them is "one of degree and not of nature." See also C. Morrisson, "Monnaie et finances dans l'empire byzantin, Xe–XIVe s.," in *Hommes et richesses* (as in note 26 above), II, 291–315, and the comment of J. Day, pp. 317–19.

Then the rates of selling *rogai* of honorific titles changed. This is clearly attested for the preferential rate in the *Peira*: for each pound of gold paid to the state, the beneficiary would now receive an annual salary of 6 (instead of 7) nomismata,[42] that is, he would receive an 8.33 percent return instead of 9.72 percent. There are other texts that show that this change was applied across the board in the system of titles, and was not a unique or exceptional phenomenon.[43] So the state, being presumably assured of the irresistible attraction of these titles, felt that it could "sell" them at a lower compensation rate, thus considerably increasing its own benefits. This effort to fill the treasury may also be at the origin of the special measures taken by two eleventh-century emperors, Constantine IX Monomachos and Constantine X Doukas, who for the first time in history opened participation in the Senate (i.e., gave high honorific titles) to some Byzantines to whom this had previously been forbidden: Lemerle proposes that Constantine IX opened the Senate to the administrators and Constantine X to the businessmen of Constantinople.[44] Whoever these new senators may have been, it is certain that most, if not all, of them had to acquire dignities and consequently boost the emperor's finances in exchange for their new titles and social position. In other words, these measures, which deeply affected the upper society, may have also had a fiscal motive, to attract to the state treasury the capital accumulated by these *nouveaux riches*, a capital that, until then, remained completely outside the *roga* system.

The crisis also affected the salaries of offices. We learn that under Isaac Komnenos (1057–59) the *rogai* of the *offikia* were curtailed for the first time.[45] Later Nikephoros III Botaneiates will be forced to interrupt payment of all dignitaries' and administrators' salaries.[46] This happened because this populist emperor distributed titles and offices *gratis* (προῖκα), with the result that the "expenses [of the state] outgrew manyfold its income" (πολλαπλασίους τὰς ἐξόδους τῆς εἰσόδου γενέσθαι). In other words, the whole system went bankrupt. Later Alexios I Komnenos will definitely abolish the yearly salaries that were traditionally paid to the holders of honorific titles.[47]

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[41] Angeliki Laiou, "God and Mammon: Credit, Trade, Profit and the Canonists," in *Byzantium in the 12th Century*, ed. N. Oikonomides (Athens, 1991), 266–85.

[42] *Peira* 38.74; cf. Lemerle, "*Roga*," 89–90.

[43] In the 10th century the payment necessary for a *spatharios* to become *protospatharios* was 18 pounds of gold (6 to become *spatharokandidatos* and 12 to become *protospatharios*, or 18 if he became *protospatharios* directly: *De cer.*, 692). In the 11th century (ca. 1056) this promotion was evaluated at 20 pounds (*Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, V, 210; cf. Lemerle, "*Roga*," 84–88). This increase is roughly proportionate to the change in the price of the *roga* mentioned above: an investment of 18 pounds at the rate of 7 would give a revenue of 126; an investment of 20 pounds at the rate of 6 would give 120.

[44] Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 287 ff.

[45] Attaleiates, 61; Skylitzes Continuatus, 104: τὰς τῶν ὀφφικίων δὲ δόσεις αὐτὸς πρῶτος περιέτεμεν.

[46] Bryennios, ed. Gautier, 258–59: ἀξιώμασι καὶ τοῖς ὀφφικίοις ἐκ βασιλέως ἀνήκουσαι δωρεαὶ διὰ τῶν χρημάτων σπάνιν ὑπεκρούοντο.

[47] Zonaras, 732–33.

There are two new and interesting elements that appear in this text concerning the administrators: first, they also had to pay something in order to obtain their position; second, they could survive without receiving a complete salary. Obviously the administrative positions provided an income other than the salary. It seems that this practice was imposing itself from the second quarter of the eleventh century on, when the first signs of economic strain appear in Byzantium.

During the reign of Michael IV (1034–41) when finances were administered by his uncle, John the Orphanotrophos, the necessity to increase the revenues of the state is manifested by the measures taken in order to assure their quick collection. The Orphanotrophos, according to the historians, "invented all roads to injustice"; "by selling the administrative positions and by giving to all a free hand to commit injustices, he filled the world with thousands of misfortunes, as the judges feared nothing when taxing the peasants, and no one controlled what they were doing."[48] It is clear from this text that the sale of offices was linked to arbitrarily increased fiscal charges on the part of those who collected it, the provincial judges.

Tax farming was not an innovation of the eleventh century; it is well attested until the seventh. But it seems that with the eighth century and the Isaurians, tax farming was severely limited if not altogether abolished. It took more than two centuries to come back. It is said that during the sole reign of Constantine VII (944–959), corruption had crept into the court and the wrong people were appointed to important positions, particularly because of Empress Helen and the *parakoimomenos* Basil who "provided that administrative positions be put up for sale,"[49] but this is clearly something done against the rules and sounds more like kickbacks than like farming out the positions. In the early eleventh century, the author of the *Peira* (8.14) specifies that all judges, tax collectors, *strategoi,* or those exercising any public office undertake service because they want it and "also give something" (παρέχοντες καί τινα)—that is, either some legal *sportulae* or some illegal kickbacks. What is certain, though, is that the author of the *Peira* does not envisage real selling of the top administrative positions.

The situation changed under John the Orphanotrophos, who practiced office farming at the highest level. Even though Empress Zoe decreed in 1042 that nominations to administrative positions should be made without purchase money,[50] the sale of top administrative offices is attested again in later times with specific examples that show how it was done. For example, at the time of Constantine X Doukas, an Armenian proposed to govern the fortress of Ani as *doux* of the theme without collecting the salary (σιτηρέσιον) that his position entailed; so he was appointed *doux*.[51] He made such savings in public spending (and, presumably, he kept a good part of the public income for himself) that the whole administration and defense of the province were wrecked and it became easy prey to the Turks. From other texts we learn of the famous Nikephoritzes who was appointed judge of Peloponnesos and Hellas because he promised money—but his administration does not seem to have left any scars on the province.[52] To make up for any payments to the state, the provincial administrators naturally relied on the collection of taxes, usually done through subcontractors, who, according to Kekaumenos, "undertook the obligation to give to the governors what they collected from the poor, and who earned only sins while the others earned money."[53] The aristocrat at the top did not participate personally in the menial task of pressuring the taxpayer, but he made sure that others would do it for him.

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[48] Skylitzes, 408–9: ὤνιον προτιθέμενος τὰς ἀρχάς, καὶ πᾶσι χαλινὸν ἐνδιδοὺς ἀδικίας, μυρίων συμφορῶν ἐνέπλησε τὴν οἰκουμένην, ἀδεῶς τῶν κριτῶν φορολογούντων τοὺς ἐντοπίους καὶ μηδενὸς ἐπιστροφὴν τιθεμένου τῶν γινομένων.

[49] Skylitzes, 237: ὠνίους τὰς ἀρχὰς ποιεῖν παρασκευαζόντων.

[50] Skylitzes, 422: ἀπριάτην τε τὰς ἀρχὰς γίνεσθαι καὶ μὴ ὠνίους, ὡς πρότερον.

[51] Attaleiates, 80–81.

Taking over other financial business for the state was always very lucrative but also entailed some risk. Kekaumenos describes how it was general belief in the eleventh century that all the major mansions in Constantinople were built with money gained by people who undertook the administration of state finances; but he also mentions the case of a *strategos* who tried an enterprise of the sort (managing the imperial domain [*episkepsis*] at Arabissos) and ended up with a deficit of 60 pounds of gold, with having his house confiscated, and with a prison term for himself.[54] This is business at a different scale than the tenth-century salaries. Compare the *deficit* of 60 pounds from one domain to the 40 pounds for the salary of the *strategos ton Anatolikon*. If a rather limited enterprise allowed one to envisage such a scale of business, much more could presumably be expected from the administration of a whole province. In the eleventh century, farming of offices was becoming extremely lucrative and went up to the top echelon of the administration: the old *roga* system was obviously getting outmoded.

The New System of the Komnenoi

The restoration of the empire came with the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081). The new regime renovated the administration as well as the title system in an effort to favor the already established aristocratic families or clans. The new hierarchy of titles was strictly reserved to individuals of high birth; the important administrative positions, to relatives of the emperor. Komnenian Byzantium looked very much like a big clan enterprise and differed sharply from the Macedonian empire, where administrators were selected according to the ruler's good pleasure but without any significant family requirements, often among the palace eunuchs. The personal relationship with the emperor was replaced by the family relationship.

The coinage system was also reformed. A new gold nomisma of a high degree of fineness was struck, the *hyperpyron,* that remained stable for quite some time. But the state continued to issue many divisionary coins.[55] At the same time, any significant discussion about the salaries either of the honorific titles or of the administrative positions disappears from the sources, at least after Alexios Komnenos' very early years: he abolished all salaries. Farming remained active for tax collection, and allowed enormous profits, and unbelievable excesses.[56] In this first phase of the Komnenian state, services were rewarded by donations of land or fiscal revenues or both. Let us take some well-known examples.

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[52] Attaleiates, 182; Skylitzes Continuatus, 155.

[53] Kekaumenos, 238: πακτονάριον καὶ πακτόνειν σεαυτὸν εἰς τὸ διδόναι τοῖς ἄρχουσιν, ἃ λαμβάνεις ἀπὸ τῶν πενήτων, καὶ σὲ μὲν κερδαίνειν ἁμαρτίας, τοὺς δὲ λαμβάνοντας ἀπὸ σοῦ κερδαίνειν χρήματα.

[54] Kekaumenos, 196.

[55] Cf. C. Morrisson, "La *logarikè*: Réforme monétaire et réforme fiscale sous Alexis Ier Comnène," *TM* 7 (1979), 419–64, esp. 462; Hendy, *Studies*, 513 ff. For the possible influx of gold from Africa, see above, note 6. See also the publications of C. Morrisson cited above, note 40.

In 1084 Alexios I's brother, the *protosebastos* Adrianos Komnenos, had been given the right to collect directly and for his own profit all the taxes paid by the whole peninsula of Kassandra.[57] In fact, this was the application of a known fiscal technique, attested since the late ninth century, providing for the cession to an individual of the taxes due from a property, usually his own. The essential difference in 1084 was the size of the donation (a whole peninsula) and the fact that the tax-producing units probably did not belong to the beneficiary of the donation at all. This was a clear case of devolution of fiscal revenues. In other words, (instead of a salary?) the *protosebastos* was given the right to directly collect the fiscal revenues of a vast province. A similar apanage in the region of Stroumitza was given in the mid-twelfth century to the caesar John Rogerios.[58]

Another case, not very different but known with more details:[59] Nikephoros Melissenos, after having attempted to take the throne in 1081, reached an agreement with Alexios Komnenos and abandoned his ambitious plan in exchange for the title of caesar and for "the city of Thessalonica." In fact, after Alexios' coronation, Nikephoros was named caesar and was given the fiscal income of Thessalonica and its region. This income was made up of the taxes and of some domains that belonged to the state. In order to create his own clientele, Melissenos, with the approval of the emperor, ceded part of the domains to some of his friends and followers, such as a certain Samuel Bourtzes, who was his relative and who had probably lost his properties in Asia Minor to the Turks. In other words, the emperor provided his caesar with a vast domain and with important fiscal income, and the latter used this source of wealth in order to support his own men, thus creating a social pyramid of mutually depending interests. This is the time when a similar and rare pyramid at the social level appears: under Alexios I we find state officials who declare themselves to be the servants of another high official, who in turn is qualified as the servant of the emperor.[60]

Another very well known case is the one of Leo Kephalas: a high official, he obtained from successive emperors the property rights over several domains with partial tax exemption; in 1086, after having successfully defended Larissa against the Normans, he obtained a whole village, Chostiane, with a complete tax exemption; and in 1089, the right to transmit this property and privileges to his children and descendants.[61] While this happened, Kephalas was also mounting in grade: from *vestarches* (1082) to *magistros* (1083) to *proedros* (1086, 1089). On the other hand, Kephalas also exercised military functions, from *primikerios ton vestiariton* (1082) to governor of Larissa, to *katepano* of Abydos (1086). One forms the impression that these donations were meant to boost his revenue in a way befitting his social status.

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[56] E.g., in 1082, we learn that from a land that paid a basic tax of 19 nomismata, the judge collected another 20 for his *antikaniskon* (*Ἐπ.Ἑτ.Βυζ.Σπ.* 3 [1926], 125), i.e., for the *adaeratio* of the traditional food basket to which he was entitled and which, half a century earlier, would have consisted of one loaf of bread, one chicken, half a measure of wine, and some fodder for his horse (*Actes de Saint-Pantéléèmôn*, ed. P. Lemerle, G. Dagron, and S. Ćirković [Paris, 1982], no. 3, line 31). Another case: in 1104, an aristocrat, Demetrios Kamateros, farmed out the taxes of Thrace and Macedonia, having promised to double their fiscal revenue (Zepos, *Jus*, I, 334).

[57] *Actes de Lavra*, ed. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos, and D. Papachryssanthou (Paris, 1970), no. 46.

[58] B. Ferjančić, "Apanažni posed kesara Jovana Rogerija," *ZRVI* 12 (1970), 193–201.

[59] *Actes de Docheiariou*, ed. N. Oikonomidès (Paris, 1984), no. 4.

[60] N. Oikonomides, *Οἱ αὐθένται τῶν Κρητικῶν τὸ* 1118, in *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ Δ' Διεθνοῦς Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου*, vol. II (Athens, 1981), 308–17.

Finally, a few words about the properties of Gregory Pakourianos, the chief general of Alexios I Komnenos' armies, described in the typikon that he issued in 1083 for his monastery at Petritzos. Most originate from imperial donations, a few are his own acquisitions, but most were previously properties of the state. The state donated to Pakourianos the right to collect from his properties the fiscal revenue that was defined at the time of the donation, but reserved to itself the right to collect any further revenue that might be created if Pakourianos improved them.[62] In other words, the state donated to Pakourianos specific amounts of fiscal revenue—something very similar to a salary, with a fundamental difference in the way in which it was collected.

This whole concept of society and of economic compensation is based on a scheme close to the feudal one and differing in substance from the *roga* system: it is based on concessions of land or of state revenue either for life or forever. Of course, as in all Byzantine institutions, this was not a complete novelty; these forms of donation existed well before the arrival of the Komnenoi to power. They are the various kinds of λογίσιμα and σολέμνια, that is, concessions, one way or the other, of fiscal revenues to private individuals or institutions, described in detail in the Fiscal Treatise of the Marciana; these existed already before the reign of Leo VI (886–912), who tried to control and organize them.[63] What changed was the extent and frequency with which they appear: what used to be a special favor became part of the system; what was mainly done to benefit ecclesiastical institutions became massively accessible to lay aristocrats; what used to be an exception became the norm of the twelfth century. From the social point of view, this served the important aristocratic families and clans well, whose predominant position received further economic confirmation. From the economic point of view, we have a new set of rules affecting the circulation of money, or at least part of it.

The regular distribution of precious garments seems also to have stopped—it is not mentioned in the sources, as far as I know. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, silk production had greatly proliferated, especially in the western provinces,[64] and high-quality silks were presumably less of an imperial monopoly. The precious garments are mentioned as gifts. Gregory Pakourianos had received several such presents (that he finally bequeathed to his monastery at Petritzos) from Alexios I Komnenos and from the *sebastokrator* Isaac Komnenos, usually upon his return from an important military victory; these garments are called "imperial" and of "highest value" (βασιλικὰ τιμαλφέστατα), thus showing that the emperor still disposed of top-quality silks; some of them the emperor was wearing himself and gave them to Pakourianos, who was very much flattered by the gesture.[65]

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[61] *Actes de Lavra,* nos. 44, 45, 48, 49.

[62] Lemerle, *Cinq études,* 181–83.

[63] F. Dölger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der byzantinischen Finanzverwaltung,* Byzantinisches Archiv 9 (Leipzig, 1927), 117–18.

[64] D. Jacoby, "Silk in Western Byzantium before the Fourth Crusade," *BZ* 84–85 (1991–92), 452–500.

The period of Alexios I Komnenos was an intermediary one and presented some feudalizing features that will disappear later. In the twelfth century state there are substantial changes in the pay of the armed forces, especially in the financing of the reservists of the provinces.[66] The Komnenoi applied the system of *pronoia/oikonomia* for maintaining a provincial cavalry. The system appears already under Alexios I Komnenos and is generalized by Manuel I (1141–80). It is based on the lifelong concession to the soldier of a revenue of the state, usually a number of taxpayers and a quantity of land, whence the soldier will extract all revenues that the state would otherwise have extracted, usually taxes and land rents. These lands return to the state after the soldier's death. In normal circumstances, the *pronoiarios* serves in the army with no salary at all. His income is expressed by a fixed amount of gold coins, the *posotes,* but in fact most of it comes in kind, in the form of a part of each year's crop.[67] The procedure is only partially monetized.

This system of conditional donations of fiscal revenue to individuals in lieu of a salary came to replace, to a large extent, the system of the *roga* in ensuring the functioning of the state: first, in the late eleventh century and under Alexios I Komnenos, in the form of permanent donations of lands and tax exemptions to the few of the upper level; then, already under Alexios I but mainly under Manuel I, it took the form of the *pronoia* and became accessible to larger numbers, including the few of the upper level, with the essential difference that now the donation was not made forever but only for a lifetime and was under the constant control of the emperor. Thus the centralized character of the government was asserted once again.

At the same time, part of what used to be "big government" passed to private or semi-private hands. Some imperial domains, which used to produce a revenue directly for the state coffers, were transformed to *pronoiai,*[68] thus skipping the cumbersome administration and bringing the user of the revenue, the soldier, in direct contact with the producer, the taxpayer.

One must stress here that these changes affected only part of the public finances. For the rest, taxation was still collected in cash. The Komnenian state appeared to be wealthy for its times, disposed of large quantities of ready cash, and was able to finance its external policies lavishly and to hire, when necessary, large mercenary armies.

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[65] L. Petit, "Le typikon de Grégoire Pakourianos," *Viz Vrem* 11 (1904), Priloženie 1, 14, cf. 53.

[66] The standing army of mercenaries is attested in both time periods that we are studying: they were professional, fully equipped soldiers, who received a salary in order to be constantly ready to participate in military operations. As they make no difference from one period to the other, we shall ignore them in what follows.

[67] I have discussed this problem in *TM* 8 (1981), 354. Recently it has been reexamined with overoptimistic conclusions by M. Bartusis, *The Late Byzantine Army: Arms and Society, 1204–1453* (Philadelphia, 1992), 172–73.

[68] N. Oikonomides, Ἡ διανομὴ τῶν βασιλικῶν ἐπισκέψεων τῆς Κρήτης (1170–1171) καὶ ἡ δημοσιονομικὴ πολιτικὴ τοῦ Μανουὴλ Α' Κομνηνοῦ, *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ Β' Διεθνοῦς Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου,* vol. III (Athens, 1968), 195–201.

An Attempt to Compare and to Understand

In the Macedonian system, the state is ever present; it functions as a pump that puts into circulation the coined money and collects it back in the form of taxes. The system of the *rogai* distributed to the high dignitaries and, to a certain degree, to the provincial army is almost completely monetized,[69] and its functioning requires the use of large amounts of coins, especially gold coins: each nomisma goes from the taxpayer to the tax collector, to the treasury, and from the treasury to the dignitary or to the state official or to the soldier in the form of a *roga*; part of it will in turn be distributed to subordinates, and the rest will be spent for the purchase of goods. This circulation, operated at the slow rhythm of public administration, condemns huge amounts of money to long periods of immobility.

In the Komnenian system this role of the state in the economy is phased down. Part (only *part*) of the public finances is demonetized. The state always controls taxation, fixes its amount on paper, and tries to enforce its collection in a spirit of equity and in cash. But large chunks of the state's financial activity now seem to be outside this process. The state is no longer the motor for all money circulation. A substantial part, at least of the tax money, does not follow the slow itinerary that kept it unproductive for the better part of the year.

The dignitary, the public official, or the soldier collects his revenue directly from the taxpayer. In this process, cash is used less than in Macedonian times, when the tax collector insisted on the *charagma*. A private person who is entitled to collect directly from the peasants can always collect part of his income in kind, either in order to feed his household and servants and, eventually, his private militia, or because he finds that the rent in kind, the *morte*, is more profitable than the rent in cash (*pakton*). This automatically entails a more intensive exploitation of the resources and a better marketing of the agricultural surplus, which is now available in larger concentrations than in the time of the small landowners. Moreover, officials or soldiers can start spending their income right away, without any administrative delays. This is a considerable increase in the efficiency of money. Neither officials nor soldiers require any salary from the state.

Let me conclude after repeating that this is an attempt to propose a partial explanation of phenomena that are by nature extremely complex, and that while the limited supply of precious metal was not the only problem of eleventh-century Byzantium, it was one of the problems.

I believe that already in the ninth and tenth centuries Byzantium had a vastly monetized economy and public finances, as can be seen in the lives of saints of the period, in which almost all attested exchanges are described as being done with cash,[70] and from the very clear cases of tax collecting and of salary paying that we know. But the efficiency of money, that is, the speed with which it circulated, was relatively limited. This was possible in a relatively slow economy.

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[69] I mean the salaries that were paid by the state to all thematic soldiers who participated in campaigns; and the obligation to pay the *strateia* for the holders of *stratiotika ktemata* who, for some reason, did not participate in military operations. For the rest, it is known that the subsistence of the thematic soldiers was financed by partial tax exemptions granted to their own lands. I have described my understanding of the system in "Middle Byzantine Provincial Recruits: Salary and Armament," in *Gonimos: Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies Presented to L. G. Westerink at 75* (Buffalo, N.Y., 1988), 121–36.

In a context of economic expansion, further needs were created and a more versatile usage of cash was necessary. Faced in the eleventh century with the inadequacy of its precious metal reserves, the Byzantine state tried several solutions. The traditional *roga* of the tenth century was replaced by other forms of compensation meant to stabilize the economy while stepping aside from part of the money circulation—by demonetizing a sector of the public finances, and by ceding to aristocrats and to the military reservists properties and/or privileges and *pronoia* grants. On the one hand, the volume of cash pinned down by the taxes/salaries system diminished; on the other, the efficiency of cash and its availability for other economic functions not related to the state increased. Some would say that this was less of a command economy but not quite a market economy.

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[70] I have put together the relevant texts in Σὲ ποιὸ βαθμὸ ἦταν ἐκχρηματισμένη ἡ μεσοβυζαντινὴ κοινωνία, in *Ροδωνιά: Τιμὴ στὸν Μ. Ι. Μανούσακα*, vol. II (Rethymnon, 1994), 363–70.

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XVIII

ΤΟ ΟΠΛΟ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΗΜΑΤΟΣ

Οι Βυζαντινοί ήσαν υποχρεωμένοι να αντιμετωπίζουν συνεχώς απειλές από πολλές πλευρές και συνεπώς βρίσκονταν σε συνεχή σχεδόν κατάσταση πολέμου, αμυντικού συνήθως. Είχαν όμως και επιφυλάξεις για τον πόλεμο καθ' εαυτό. Στο Στρατηγικό του ο αυτοκράτορας Λέων ο Σοφός τονίζει πως καλό θα ήταν να αποφεύγεται ο πόλεμος[1]. Και ο Κωνσταντίνος Πορφυρογέννητος γράφοντας το βιβλίο που είναι γενικά γνωστό ως το *De Administrando Imperio*, έδειξε πώς προκειμένου να αποφύγει την αναμφισβήτητη ταλαιπωρία της πολεμικής αναμέτρησης, η αυτοκρατορία θα μπορούσε να παροτρύνει κάποιον άλλο λαό να πολεμήσει τον αντίπαλό της –γι' αυτό και καθορίζει με αρκετή προσοχή ποιοι από τους γείτονές της μπορούν να χρησιμοποιηθούν εναντίον ποιων[2].

Για να αποφύγει κανείς έναν πόλεμο, μπορούσε επίσης να εξαγοράσει την ειρήνη, πληρώνοντας απευθείας τον αντίπαλό του και συχνά υποσχόμενος ότι θα επαναλάβει τις πληρωμές αυτές κάθε χρόνο, εφόσον διατηρούνταν η ειρήνη. Αυτή ήταν μια τακτική που ακολουθήθηκε από τους Βυζαντινούς αλλά που δεν επαινέθηκε ποτέ διότι επρόκειτο ουσιαστικά για υποτέλεια. Και βέβαια δεν ήταν θεωρητικώς δυνατό να γίνει αποδεκτό πως ο μοναδικός αυτοκράτορας που με θέλημα Θεού βασίλευε επί των Ρωμαίων μπορούσε να είναι υποτελής ενός άλλου κοσμικού άρχοντα. Αλλά η θεωρία δεν ταυτιζόταν πάντα με την πραγματικότητα. Όταν βρέθηκε σε μεγάλη ανάγκη, ο βυζαντινός βασιλιάς δέχθηκε την υποτέλεια προκειμένου να εξασφαλίσει την ειρήνη από έναν επικίνδυνο εχθρό, που δεν μπορούσε να αντιμετωπισθεί με τα όπλα. Ο Νικηφόρος Α΄ μάλιστα, πιεζόμενος από τον χαλίφη *Haroun al Rashid* το 806, δέχθηκε να του καταβάλει, πέρα από το συνολικό ποσό της υποτέλειας, και τρία νομίσματα ως κεφαλικό φόρο για τον εαυτό του και άλλα τρία για κεφαλικό φόρο του γιου του Σταυρακίου[3]. Νομίζω πως αυτή ήταν η ταπεινωτικότερη συνθήκη που απεδέχθη Βυζαντινός αυτοκράτορας, δεδομένου μάλιστα πως η καταβολή του κεφαλικού φόρου (*djiziya*) για

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[1] Leonis imperatoris, *Tactica*, έκδ. R. Vári, I, Βουδαπέστη 1917, 4, 39.

[2] Π.χ. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, έκδ. Moravcsik - Jenkins, Ουάσινγκτον 1967, κεφ. 4 (*Πατζιναχῖται ἐναντίον Ρῶς καί Οὔγγρων*).

[3] F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches*, αρ. 366.

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τους Μουσουλμάνους σήμαινε πως ο καταβάλλων τον φόρο αναγνώριζε πως ήταν αλλόθρησκος υπήκοος του χαλίφη (*zimmi*).

Βεβαίως τα πράγματα δεν ήταν πάντοτε τόσο ξεκαθαρισμένα, και οι Βυζαντινοί έκαναν κάθε προσπάθεια για να τα παρουσιάσουν με λιγότερο σκούρα χρώματα. Συνήθως οι τακτικές πληρωμές στο εξωτερικό συνοδεύονταν και με παραχώρηση τιμητικών τίτλων στους δικαιούχους. Με τον τρόπο αυτό η αποστολή των χρημάτων εμφανιζόταν ως αποστολή του μισθού, της *ρόγας*, που δικαιούνταν ο ξένος τιτλούχος εξαιτίας του τίτλου του, όπως ακριβώς θα την δικαιούνταν κι αν ήταν Βυζαντινός[4]. Ταυτόχρονα όμως, ο ξένος δικαιούχος, χωρίς καλά καλά να το καταλάβει, αναγνώριζε την υπεροχή του Βυζαντινού αυτοκράτορα, αφού αποκτούσε ένα Βυζαντινό τίτλο, ένα *οἰκειωτικόν*, και με τον τρόπο αυτό, συγκαταλεγόταν στους *οἰκείους* του βασιλιά της Κωνσταντινούπολης[5].

Για να εξυπηρετηθεί αυτή η πολιτική ανάγκη, οι παραχωρήσεις τίτλων στο εξωτερικό γίνονταν προς τον ξένο ηγεμόνα, αλλά με την εντολή οι τίτλοι αυτοί να μοιρασθούν στους ευγενείς του -αν δεν απονέμονταν από τον Βυζαντινό αυτοκράτορα κατευθείαν προς ορισμένα άτομα. Περί το 1082, ο Αλέξιος Α΄ παραχώρησε κατευθείαν στον (εκάστοτε) δόγη της Βενετίας τον τίτλο του σεβαστού και στον εκάστοτε πατριάρχη του Γράδο τον τίτλο του υπερτίμου, με την ρόγα 20 λιτρών χρυσού (1.440 νομισμάτων), που τον συνόδευε[6]. Αντίθετα, οκτώ χρόνια νωρίτερα, το 1074, ο Μιχαήλ Δούκας είχε στείλει στον Ροβέρτο Γυισκάρδο, ως δώρο με την ευκαιρία συνοικεσίου, μια ετήσια επιχορήγηση ύψους 200 λιτρών χρυσού (14.400 νομίσματα) με την μορφή πολλών τίτλων διαφόρων επιπέδων που συνεπάγονταν και ρόγες, που θα μοιράζονταν στους ευγενείς του Νορμανδού μονάρχη[7]. Τέλος, όταν περί το 1081 ο Αλέξιος Κομνηνός έστειλε στον Γερμανό αυτοκράτορα Ερρίκο Δ΄ ένα τεράστιο χρηματικό ποσό, έστειλε και τον κατεπάνω των αξιωμάτων Κωνσταντίνο Χοιροσφάκτη με την ρητή αποστολή να μοιράσει τα αξιώματα στους ευγενείς σύμφωνα με τις οδηγίες του Γερμανού αυτοκράτορα[8].

Ο τρόπος αυτός πληρωμής σε ξένο κράτος ήταν συμφερτικός για τον Βυζαντινό αυτοκράτορα γιατί του επέτρεπε να σώσει τα προσχήματα· του επέτρεπε επίσης να εκμεταλλευθεί τη σχετική αποκέντρωση του φεουδαρχικού συστήματος και να δημιουργήσει ευθείς δεσμούς με ξένους ευγενείς, οι οποίοι, χάρη στη γλύκα των ετήσιων πληρωμών του μισθού, θα έτειναν να αντιταχθούν σε απόπειρα ακύρωσης της συμφωνίας για να διατηρήσουν την ετήσια επιχορήγηση.

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[4] P. Lemerle, «Roga et rente d'État aux Xe-XIe siècles», *Revue des Études Byzantines* 25 (1967), σελ. 77-100.

[5] N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles*, Παρίσι 1972, σελ. 291.

[6] Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 1081.

[7] Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 1003. Τελευταία μελέτη Lemerle, *ό.π.*, σελ. 92 κ.ε.

[8] *Regesten*, αρ. 1068. Πρβλ. Lemerle, *ό.π.*, σελ. 97.

Επιπλέον, για να γίνει η επιχορήγηση αυτή πιο ελκυστική για τους ξένους και λιγότερο επαχθής για τη Βυζαντινή κρατική οικονομία, τα χρηματικά ποσά συνοδεύονταν και από μεταξωτά υφάσματα υψηλής ποιότητας, προϊόντα των αυτοκρατορικών εργαστηρίων, που δεν βρίσκονταν στην αγορά. Τα Βυζαντινά αυτοκρατορικά μεταξωτά αποτελούσαν σύμβολο της υψηλής τάξης και μέσα στην αυτοκρατορία και στο εξωτερικό. Η εμπορική τους αξία ήταν εξαιρετικά υψηλή, ακόμη υψηλότερη όμως ήταν η αξία τους ως δείγματος κοινωνικής διάκρισης, αφού παράγονταν σε περιορισμένο αριθμό και η κυκλοφορία τους ελεγχόταν πολύ στενά. Αποτελούσαν ένα σημαντικό οικονομικό εργαλείο στα χέρια του αυτοκράτορα, δεδομένου ότι η ποσότητά τους κάθε χρόνο μπορούσε να καθορισθεί σύμφωνα με τις ανάγκες του θρόνου, λαμβανομένης βέβαια υπόψη και της ανάγκης τα μεταξωτά να παραμένουν σπάνια ούτως ώστε να διατηρούν την υψηλή τους τιμή. Το μετάξι, πρώτη ύλη υψηλής αξίας, συχνά ερχόταν να αντικαταστήσει το χρυσάφι – και σε μερικές περιπτώσεις το κράτος μοίραζε χρυσό σε αντικατάσταση των μεταξωτών υφασμάτων που δεν ήσαν τότε διαθέσιμα[9].

Ας περάσουμε σε μερικά παραδείγματα «υποτέλειας» και σε μερικούς αριθμούς για την περίοδο από τα τέλη του 8ου ώς τον 10ο αι. Κύρια πηγή πληροφοριών είναι βέβαια τα *Regesten* του Dölger, στα οποία αναγράφονται όλες οι συνθήκες του Βυζαντίου με ξένες δυνάμεις και στα οποία βρίσκει κανείς τις παραπομπές στις πηγές και τη βιβλιογραφία. Όλα τα παρακάτω παραδείγματα αναφέρονται σε πληρωμές που έγιναν προς τους Άραβες:

781 προς Άραβες 70 χιλ. χρυσά νομίσματα για αγορά ειρήνης (μέσος όρος περίπου 70 χιλ./έτος): Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 340.

798 προς Άραβες 100 χιλ. χρυσά νομίσματα για αγορά ειρήνης (μέσος όρος περίπου 100 χιλ./έτος): Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 352.

806 προς Άραβες 30 χιλ. χρυσά νομίσματα το χρόνο για αγορά ειρήνης (μέσος όρος 30 χιλ./έτος): Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 366.

832 προς Άραβες 100 χιλ. χρυσά νομίσματα για πενταετή ειρήνη (μέσος όρος 20 χιλ./έτος): Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 425.

917 προς Άραβες 22 χιλ. χρυσά νομίσματα το χρόνο (μέσος όρος 22 χιλ./έτος): Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 603.

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[9] *De Cerimoniis aulae byzatninae*, Βόννη, σελ. 668, 669.

924 προς Άραβες 11 χιλ. χρυσά νομίσματα το χρόνο (μέσος όρος 11 χιλ./ έτος): Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 603.

Από τους παραπάνω αριθμούς διαπιστώνεται πως καθ' όλη την εποχή κατά την οποία το Βυζαντινό νόμισμα ήταν σταθερό, δηλαδή πριν από τα μέσα του 11ου αι., τα ποσά που πλήρωνε η αυτοκρατορία στο εξωτερικό ανέρχονταν στις 11-100 χιλ. χρυσά νομίσματα το χρόνο. Είναι προφανές πως το ποσό κυμαινόταν ανάλογα με τη συγκυρία. Από την άλλη πλευρά όμως δεν πρέπει κανείς να παραμελεί το γεγονός πως τα νούμερα που έχουμε αφορούν μόνο πληρωμές προς τους Άραβες, τους μόνους οικονομικά ανεπτυγμένους (και πραγματικά ισχυρούς) αντιπάλους του Βυζαντίου. Μπορούμε λοιπόν να υποθέσουμε –μόνο να υποθέσουμε– πως οι πληρωμές προς άλλους λιγότερο ανεπτυγμένους (και λιγότερο ισχυρούς) γείτονες θα αναφέρονταν σε σαφώς μικρότερα ποσά. Τέτοιες πληρωμές θα πρέπει να έγιναν, π.χ. προς τους Ούγγρους, τους Πετσενέγους και τους Σελτζούκους (893, 914, 1053, 1055: Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 522, 575, 909, 929)[10].

Βέβαια τίποτε δεν μας βεβαιώνει πως οι αριθμοί αυτοί είναι ακριβείς. Δεδομένης όμως της γνωστής τάσης όλων των ιστορικών, θα μπορούσαμε να υποθέσουμε μονάχα πως οι αριθμοί αυτοί θα μπορούσαν να είναι φουσκωμένοι. Όπως όμως θα δούμε παρακάτω, κάτι τέτοιο δεν φαίνεται να συμβαίνει – και αν συνέβαινε θα ενίσχυε ακόμη περισσότερο το επιχείρημα που θέλω να παρουσιάσω.

Έχουμε λίγες αλλά ακριβείς και ασφαλείς πληροφορίες για μια περίπτωση που εξαγοράσθηκε ένας γείτονας προκειμένου να πολεμήσει για λογαριασμό της αυτοκρατορίας. Για να αντιμετωπισθεί μια επανάσταση Λομβαρδών ευγενών, το 934/935 στάλθηκε στην Ιταλία ο πρωτοσπαθάριος Επιφάνιος με στρατιωτικές ενισχύσεις, 1.553 καβαλλάρηδες. Έφερνε μαζί του όμως και δώρα προς τον βασιλιά της Ιταλίας Hugo, για να τον πείσει να εκστρατεύσει εναντίον των επαναστατών, να τους καθυποτάξει και να παραδώσει τα κάστρα τους στον Βυζαντινό στρατηγό Λογγοβαρδίας. Έχουμε τον λεπτομερή κατάλογο των δώρων αυτών: 7.200 χρυσά νομίσματα, καμιά εικοσαριά μεταξωτά φορέματα, τρία αργυρά επίχρυσα σκεύη, θυμίαμα, υελία, κ.λπ.[11]. Ενδιαφέρον είναι πως στις οδηγίες λέγεται καθαρά ότι: 1) ένα μέρος των δώρων προορίζεται για τον μαρκήσιο του ρήγα της Ιταλίας ο οποίος συνορεύει με το θέμα Λογγοβαρδίας, και 2) ότι τα δώρα θα δίνονταν στον ρήγα εφόσον ο ίδιος εξεστράτευε και νικούσε τους επαναστάτες· αν ο πόλεμος γινόταν από υφισταμένους του, οι υφιστάμενοι αυτοί θα παραλάμβαναν τα δώρα για να τα δώσουν στον ρήγα. Με άλλα λόγια, δεν τηρούνταν καν τα προσχήματα· τα «δώρα» αντιμετωπίζονταν ως απλή πληρωμή για υπηρεσίες και θα καταβάλλονταν σε εκείνον ο οποίος προσέφερε την πραγματική υπηρεσία, ως πραγματική ανταμοιβή.

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[10] Όπως παρατήρησε ο κ. Ε. Χρυσός, οι πληρωμές σε υπανάπτυκτους γείτονες παρουσίαζαν πιθανότατα και το προσόν ότι τα χρυσά νομίσματα που δίνονταν, σύντομα επέστρεφαν στην αυτοκρατορία που ήταν η κύρια αγορά αγαθών.

[11] *De Cerimoniis*, 661.

Τα ποσά που αναφέρονται για τους Γερμανούς αυτοκράτορες, κινούνται σε σαφώς υψηλότερο επίπεδο, σε πολύ μεταγενέστερη όμως εποχή. Το 1081-1082 στάλθηκαν στον αυτοκράτορα Ερρίκο Β΄ δώρα αξίας 5.000 λιτρών=360.000 νομισμάτων, για να πολεμήσει Νορμανδούς[12]. Επίσης το 1196 ο Ερρίκος Δ΄ διεκδίκησε κι αυτός 5.000 λίτρες (360.000 νομίσματα), που στην συνέχεια μειώθηκαν στις 1.300 λίτρες (93.600 νομίσματα) για εξαγορά ειρήνης[13]. Αλλά βέβαια δεν πρέπει κανείς να λησμονεί πως το 1081 και πάλι το 1196 το Βυζαντινό νόμισμα είχε υποστεί σημαντικότατη υποτίμηση (διατηρούσε λιγότερο από 40% της αξίας που είχε τον Θ΄ αι.).

Τα ποσά που αναφέραμε φαίνονται μεγάλα. Για να κρίνουμε όμως το πραγματικό μέγεθός τους θα πρέπει να τα συγκρίνουμε με άλλα μεγέθη. Τι αποθέματα χρυσού διέθετε ο Βυζαντινός αυτοκράτορας; Τι ποσά ξόδευε για άλλες πληρωμές; Και, κυρίως, πόσο θα έπρεπε να ξοδέψει ο ίδιος προκειμένου να αποφύγει την καταβολή των μετρητών που του ζητούσαν, ας πούμε, οι Άραβες; Με άλλα λόγια: οι υποτέλειες αυτές είχαν κάποιο οικονομικό νόημα ή ήταν απλώς υποχωρήσεις από μέρους ηγεμόνων που ήσαν νωθροί ή πανικόβλητοι;

Για τα αποθέματα χρυσού έχουμε μερικούς αριθμούς που προέρχονται από αφηγηματικές πηγές και συνεπώς θα μπορούσαν να αμφισβητηθούν ως υπερβολικοί. Το χαρακτηριστικό όμως είναι πως οι αριθμοί αυτοί βρίσκονται στην ίδια τάξη μεγεθών και συνεπώς θα μπορούσαν να αντιπροσωπεύουν αν όχι την αλήθεια, τουλάχιστον αυτό που νομιζόταν πως ήταν η αλήθεια. Μαθαίνουμε, π.χ., πως ο αυτοκράτορας Θεόφιλος πεθαίνοντας το 842 άφησε 6.984.000 χρυσά νομίσματα στο αυτοκρατορικό θησαυροφυλάκιο του Φύλακος (97.000 λίτρες). Και ότι η χήρα του Θεοδώρα, κατά την διάρκεια της αντιβασιλείας της, που έληξε το 856, πρόσθεσε σ' αυτά άλλες 3.000 λίτρες, με αποτέλεσμα να αφήσει 7.200.000 χρυσά νομίσματα[14] –ή, σύμφωνα με άλλη πηγή, 7.848.000 χρυσά νομίσματα ή 109.000 λίτρες χρυσού[15]. Δεν γνωρίζουμε ποιο από τα δύο νούμερα είναι πλησιέστερο στην πραγματικότητα, αλλά τα ποσά είναι συγκρίσιμα.

Αντίστοιχες πληροφορίες βρίσκουμε σχεδόν δυο αιώνες αργότερα. Όταν πέθανε το 1025, ο Βασίλειος Β΄ είχε αφήσει, λέγεται, 200.000 λίτρες στο αυτοκρατορικό ταμείο, δηλ. περί τα 14.400.000 χρυσά νομίσματα[16]. Σύμφωνα με τον Ψελλό επρόκειτο κυρίως για λεία πολέμου που συνέλεξε στις εκστρατείες του, κυρίως στην Ανατολή (γνωρίζουμε πως στο λιγότερο εκχρηματισμένο Βουλγαρικό Κράτος, το θησαυροφυλάκιο του τσάρου δεν ξεπερνούσε σε αξία τα 720.000 χρυσά νομίσματα, τα οποία άλλωστε όλα μοιράσθηκαν ως ρόγα του Βυζαντινού στρατού)[17], αλλά και από δημεύσεις περιουσιών διαφόρων ευγενών, κυρίως αυτών που είχαν επαναστατήσει εναντίον του. Η αποταμίευση τόσο μεγάλου ποσού εκπλήσσει για ένα αυτοκράτορα που διεξήγε συνεχείς εκστρατείες, και δεν μπορεί να ερμηνευθεί παρά μόνο ως αποτέλεσμα σκληρών οικονομιών και μείωσης των εξόδων του κράτους σε όλα πλην των στρατιωτικών δαπανών. Γιατί πρέπει εδώ να προστεθεί επίσης πως ο Βασίλειος Β΄ δεν επέμεινε στην συλλογή των φόρων από τους μικροϊδιοκτήτες της αυτοκρατορίας[18].

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[12] Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 1068, 1077.

[13] Dölger, *Regesten*, αρ. 1638.

[14] Συνεχιστής Θεοφάνους, σελ. 253.

[15] Συνεχιστής Θεοφάνους, σελ. 172· Γενέσιος IV, 11. Πρέπει να σημειωθεί πως στους υπολογισμούς του ο W. Treadgold, *The Byzantine State Finances in the Eighth and Ninth Century*, Νέα Υόρκη 1982, παρερμηνεύοντας την φράση των πηγών, θεώρησε εσφαλμένα πως έμεναν 1.900 κεντη-

Όπως κι αν έχει το πράγμα, τα μαρτυρούμενα αποθέματα χρυσού, αν ήταν αληθινά, θα επέτρεπαν αρκετά εύκολα την καταβολή χρηματικών ποσών, όπως αυτά που αναφέρουν οι πηγές, σε ξένους με τον σκοπό να υποστηριχθεί η εξωτερική πολιτική της αυτοκρατορίας.

Το ουσιωδέστερο ερώτημα είναι κατά πόσον η λύση της πληρωμής στο εξωτερικό ήταν οικονομικά συμφέρουσα. Για να την αποφύγει, ο αυτοκράτορας θα έπρεπε να ετοιμάσει ένα στρατό αρκετά ισχυρό ώστε να αντιμετωπίσει με ελπίδες επιτυχίας τον αντίπαλο που δεν θα πλήρωνε – ή που δεν θα καταπολεμούσε χάρη στις υπηρεσίες ενός τρίτου. Τι θα κόστιζε μια τέτοια επιχείρηση;

Και εδώ οι αριθμοί είναι λίγοι και σε μερικές περιπτώσεις αβέβαιοι. Για τον πρώιμο Θ΄ αι. μαθαίνουμε πως η ρόγα του όλου θέματος των Αρμενιακών, την οποία άρπαξαν οι Άραβες κατά τη διάρκεια μιας επιδρομής τους, ανερχόταν σε 1.300 λίτρες χρυσού (93.600 νομίσματα) ενώ η ρόγα που άρπαξαν οι Βούλγαροι στον Στρυμώνα (προφανώς του θέματος Μακεδονίας) ανερχόταν σε 1.100 λίτρες (79.200 νομίσματα)[19]. Τα ποσά είναι τεράστια, θα μπορούσε όμως να είναι φουσκωμένα από τον χρονογράφο.

Αντίθετα έχουμε εξαιρετικά λεπτομερείς και ακριβείς πληροφορίες χάρη

νάρια και όχι 1.090 (όπως γράφουν οι πηγές), και υπολόγισε τον θησαυρό που άφησε η Θεοδώρα στο τεράστιο νούμερο των 13.680.000 χρυσών νομισμάτων – αριθμό που και θεώρησε πιο αξιόπιστο και πάνω στον οποίο βάσισε όλους τους περαιτέρω υπολογισμούς του. Τα λάθη που προκύπτουν από μια τέτοια παρανόηση είναι προφανή.

[16] Ψελλός, *Χρονογραφία,* I, 19· Ζωναράς III, σελ. 561-562.

[17] Σκυλίτζης, σελ. 359.

[18] Τα σχετικά με τα αποθέματα του Βασιλείου Β΄ αμφισβητήθηκαν από τον P. Carellos, «Bemerkungen zur Herrschaft Basileios' II Bulgaroktonus», *Byzantinoslavica* 63 (1992), σελ. 8-16.

[19] Θεοφάνης, σελ. 482, 489.

στους λογαριασμούς των εκστρατειών εναντίον της Κρήτης που οργάνωσε η αυτοκρατορία το 911 και το 949[20]. Μολονότι και στις δυο χρησιμοποιήθηκαν σχεδόν αποκλειστικά ήδη υπάρχοντα πλοία και οι άνδρες πληρώθηκαν μόνο για την κινητοποίησή τους, η όλη επιχείρηση του 911 κόστισε 239.126 χρυσά νομίσματα (δηλ. πάνω από ένα τόνο χρυσού). Η εκστρατεία του 949 κόστισε 224.030 νομίσματα. Και για τις δύο είχαν επίσης συλλεγεί επιπλέον συνδοσίες εις είδος από ορισμένες επαρχίες, για τις ανάγκες των εκστρατευτικών σωμάτων (τρόφιμα, τεχνικός εξοπλισμός, βοηθητικά άλογα). Τα ποσά είναι τεράστια. Και το έξοδο φαίνεται ακόμη φοβερότερο αν σκεφθεί κανείς πως κι οι δυο εκστρατείες απέτυχαν οικτρά.

Μπορεί βέβαια να πει κανείς πως αυτές ήταν υπερπόντιες εκστρατείες και κόστισαν πολύ λόγω της μαζικής συμμετοχής του ναυτικού. Και ότι, όντας επιθετικές επιχειρήσεις, παρείχαν και την ελπίδα κατάκτησης μιας νέας χώρας, και συνεπώς απόσβεσης του μεγάλου κόστους. Αλλά βέβαια στρέφονταν εναντίον ενός κρατιδίου, του Εμιράτου της Κρήτης. Δεν υπάρχει αμφιβολία πως για να αντιμετωπισθεί ο χαλίφης της Βαγδάτης θα χρειάζονταν πολλαπλάσιες δυνάμεις ξηράς απ' ό,τι για τον εμίρη της Κρήτης. Συνεπώς η τάξη μεγέθους που γνωρίζουμε χάρη στις εκστρατείες του 911 και του 949 παραμένει αξιόπιστη. Και είναι πολλές φορές μεγαλύτερη από τα ποσά που αναφέραμε παραπάνω για εξαγορά ειρήνης ή για εξαγορά συμμαχίας – 2, 5 έως 21 φορές μεγαλύτερη. Ακόμη και τα δώρα προς τον Γερμανό αυτοκράτορα το 1081 ήταν συμφερτικά αφού απέβλεπαν στο να κινητοποιήσουν μια ολόκληρη αυτοκρατορία εναντίον ενός θανάσιμου και εξαιρετικά επικίνδυνου εχθρού, των Νορμανδών της Σικελίας, που είχαν ήδη αποβιβασθεί στα Βαλκάνια και απειλούσαν την ίδια την ύπαρξη της αυτοκρατορίας των Κομνηνών.

Βέβαια, για να λειτουργήσει η μια ή η άλλη εξαγορά, ήταν αναγκαίο να συνοδεύεται και από κάποια επίδειξη στρατιωτικής ισχύος. Είδαμε πως η αποστολή του Επιφανίου με τα δώρα στην Ιταλία συνοδεύθηκε και από ενισχύσεις 1.500 ιππέων. Δηλαδή, η εξαγορά της ειρήνης δεν απάλλασσε την αυτοκρατορία από τις στρατιωτικές δαπάνες – τις μείωνε όμως πολύ. Με άλλα λόγια, όπως και να το υπολογίσει κανείς, η εξαγορά της ειρήνης – ή η εξαγορά μιας συμμαχίας – στοίχιζε στον αυτοκράτορα πολύ λιγότερο από την διοργάνωση μιας στρατιωτικής επιχείρησης σε μεγάλη κλίμακα. Και δεδομένου πως η εξαγορά της ειρήνης είχε νόημα μόνο όταν η αυτοκρατορία βρισκόταν σε άμυνα, κι αν ακόμη η νίκη έστεφε τα Βυζαντινά όπλα (πράγμα που ποτέ δεν ήταν σίγουρο), δεν μπορούσε να ελπίζεται ουσιαστική λεία πολέμου επαρκής για να αποσβέσει το έξοδο της στρατιωτικής κινητοποίησης. Αντίθετα, θα έπρεπε να προβλεφθούν καταστροφές στο εσωτερικό της αυτοκρατορίας, αναπόφευκτες σε περίπτωση εχθρικής εισβολής.

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[20] *De Cerimoniis*, σελ. 651-678.

Το μειονέκτημα της εξαγοράς της ειρήνης, πέρα από την ταπείνωση, ήταν πως ίσως χρειαζόταν να επαναληφθεί. Το μειονέκτημα του πολέμου εκστρατείας ήταν, πέρα από το μεγάλο κόστος του, και η αβεβαιότητα για την έκβασή του.

Είναι φανερό πως το δίλημμα πρέπει να εξετασθεί στο πλαίσιο του αυξημένου εκχρηματισμού της Βυζαντινής οικονομίας και του μειωμένου εκχρηματισμού άλλων οικονομιών. Το χρυσό νόμισμα, ο *solidus*, ήταν περιζήτητο διεθνώς, τουλάχιστον μέχρι την μεγάλη κρίση του ΙΑ΄ αι. Κι αυτό το νόμισμα αποτελούσε σημαντικό όπλο στα χέρια του κράτους, ακριβώς επειδή ήταν περιζήτητο και έχαιρε της γενικής εμπιστοσύνης.

Σε μια εκχρηματισμένη οικονομία, όπως η Βυζαντινή, όλες οι υπηρεσίες πληρώνονται σε μετρητά και συνεπώς οι στρατιωτικές κινητοποιήσεις είναι καλά οργανωμένες αλλά πολυέξοδες υποθέσεις. Σε πρωτόγονες κοινωνίες οι στρατιωτικές κινητοποιήσεις βασίζονται σημαντικά στον εθελοντισμό και κοστίζουν λίγο – στις κοινωνίες όμως αυτές το υψηλής ποιότητας χρήμα είναι αντικείμενο σεβασμού. Περιζήτητα είναι και τα αξιώματα, που απονέμονται μαζί με τους υπεσχημένους μισθούς. Το ίδιο και τα μεταξωτά, που με τόση σοφία παρήγαν σε μικρές ποσότητες και διαχειρίζονταν οι Βυζαντινοί αυτοκράτορες. Όπως σημειώσαμε, αν με το όπλο αυτό οι Βυζαντινοί κατόρθωσαν να συνάψουν συμφερτικές συμφωνίες με τους οικονομικά ανεπτυγμένους Άραβες, θα συνήψαν αναμφίβολα ακόμη πιο συμφέρουσες συμφωνίες με τους υπανάπτυκτους γείτονές τους.

Οι Βυζαντινοί αυτοκράτορες της Μακεδονικής δυναστείας που εξαγόραζαν την ειρήνη ή την συμμαχία, δεν ήταν ούτε νωθροί, ούτε πανικόβλητοι. Απλώς γνώριζαν καλή αριθμητική και ποιο ήταν το συμφέρον τους.

XIX

IL LIVELLO ECONOMICO DI CRETA NEGLI ANNI INTORNO AL 1204

Creta è stata da sempre un'isola ricca. Ha avuto sempre un'importante produzione agricola che ha permesso ai suoi abitanti di vivere e di effettuare esportazioni. Per di più la sua posizione al centro del Mediterraneo orientale le ha conferito una notevole ed ininterrotta importanza strategica a vantaggio delle attività economiche come di quelle politico-militari. Nell'alto medioevo la dominazione araba mostrò quale importante ruolo essa poteva sostenere nel confronto militare fra i nuovi signori e l'Impero Bizantino. Le fonti, peraltro, parlano poco di Creta dopo la sua riconquista da parte dei Bizantini nel 961. Non sembra che essa sia stata utilizzata come base per imprese marinare di grande portata. Dal punto di vista amministrativo fu organizzata come tema di Bisanzio con a capo uno *strategos* e, più tardi, un duca o un *katepano*.

Nel 1090 o nel 1091 ci fu da parte di un certo Karykis, di cui non conosciamo nè le origini nè la carica, un tentativo di fare dell'isola uno stato indipendente. Si sostiene di solito che egli fosse un comandante del luogo però i testi che parlano di questa insurrezione lasciano intendere che Karykis poteva anche essere venuto da fuori. Comunque siano andate le cose, il tentativo fallì miseramente visto che nell'estate del 1092 gli stessi Cretesi uccisero il ribelle e riconsegnarono l'isola alla flotta bizantina che si stava avvicinando[1].

È peraltro vero che ribellioni di carattere separatista compaiono a Bisanzio verso il secolo XI e di conseguenza l'avventura di Karykis non costituisce un fatto isolato. Nella stessa epoca era apparso anche il movimento separatista di Rapsommatis a Cipro, che già in questo cam-

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1) D. TSOUGARAKIS, *Byzantine Crete from the 5th Century to the Venetian Conquest*, Athens 1988, pp. 78-80.

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po aveva avuto un precedente, in quanto si era trovata a conoscere la rivoluzione separatista di Theofilos Erotikos nel 1043. È significativo in ogni caso il fatto che le rivoluzioni separatiste avessero luogo nelle grandi isole del Mediterraneo orientale, in quelle cioè che godevano di una certa autosufficienza. Quali erano però le motivazioni dei ribelli? L'appropriazione dei proventi della terra o di altri introiti?

Chalandon ha attribuito l'insurrezione di Karykis alle dure misure fiscali imposte dall'imperatore Alessio I Comneno. Correttamente Dimitris Tsougarakis osserva tuttavia che le fonti non riportano nulla in proposito e che l'esito della ribellione lascia intendere che probabilmente Karykis si era imposto con la forza piuttosto che con la popolarità. Per di più l'alleggerimento fiscale non sarebbe mai potuto derivare da qualcuno che comunque apparteneva all'amministrazione bizantina e ancora meno da qualcuno venuto da fuori come conquistatore dell'isola.

Alla pari del resto dell'Impero, Creta conobbe una notevole espansione economica fra il secolo X e il secolo XII[2]. Nonostante non sia stato effettuato alcuno scavo sistematico in una città medievale di Creta, e di conseguenza ogni confronto numerico dei reperti numismatici locali con quelli di Atene o di Corinto sia discutibile fin dall'inizio, possiamo affermare, grazie alle ricerche di D. Tsougarakis[3], che la presenza di denaro sull'isola aumentò velocemente e con alcune caratteristiche particolari.

Prima di tutto le monete d'oro e d'argento rinvenute a Creta costituiscono una percentuale di molto superiore rispetto alle monete in rame in confronto alle altre città greche. Tale osservazione sembra stia ad indicare una maggiore concentrazione di capitali nelle mani della classe più elevata rispetto a quanto accadeva nella Grecia continentale. Naturalmente però non si può escludere che l'occultamento di tesori a Creta in un periodo di pace assoluta sia da mettere in rapporto con vendette o contrasti locali e non con avvenimenti di carattere storico generale.

Un secondo elemento caratteristico è che la presenza di denaro nell'isola si rafforza nel corso e sino alla fine del secolo XII, in contrasto con quanto si osserva nella Grecia continentale[4]. I ritrovamenti di monete di Manuele I Comneno (1143-1180) rappresentano il 16% dell'insieme dei rinvenimenti a Creta, mentre ad Atene rappre-

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2) A. HARVEY, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire 900-1200*, Cambridge 1989.

3) TSOUGARAKIS, *Byzantine Crete* cit., cap. VI.

4) *Ibid.*, p. 268.

sentano il 13% e a Corinto il 19,5%. Se prendiamo in considerazione il carattere occasionale dei recuperi possiamo renderci conto del fatto che queste cifre riflettono realtà analoghe a Creta e nella Grecia continentale. In seguito però le cose mutano radicalmente. Le monete degli imperatori della dinastia degli Angeli, di Isacco II e di Alessio III (1185-1203), rappresentano meno dello 0,5% del totale di Atene e Corinto mentre a Creta giungono all'8,3% del totale. In altre parole la circolazione monetaria, che sembra aver conosciuto una notevole flessione nella Grecia continentale, pare essersi mantenuta a Creta fino al 1204 agli alti livelli precedenti.

Quest'ultima osservazione viene suffragata anche da un altro elemento. Nel secondo periodo bizantino di Creta (961-1206), il centro delle attività economiche dell'isola era Candia. Da Candia e dalla sua area (che comprende a sud alcune pianure straordinariamente fertili), cioè dal centro dell'isola, deriva la maggior parte dei ritrovamenti monetari del periodo che va dal 961 al 1118. Nel periodo successivo invece, dal 1118 al 1206, i reperti numismatici riguardano una parte molto più ampia dell'isola, fatta eccezione soltanto per le zone occidentali che sembra presentino una scarsa quantità di monete. Naturalmente la massima concentrazione di ritrovamenti monetari si riferisce a Candia e alla sua area, ma pare che zone sempre più vaste dell'isola partecipassero a forme di economia evolute. In altre parole, Creta sembra avere mantenuto la sua favorevole situazione economica nonostante il calo che si può osservare in altre regioni dell'Impero. Ne possiamo dedurre che la sua economia poggiava su particolari condizioni produttive o/e sull'organizzazione capillare dell'isola piuttosto che sulle fortune generali dell'Impero.

Le informazioni di cui disponiamo circa l'economia cretese del XII secolo sono estremamente limitate. Tsougarakis sottolinea che l'economia dell'isola, come quella di qualsiasi altro stato medievale, era fondamentalmente rurale. Il settore agricolo risultava sufficiente per il consumo locale e permetteva di esportare in quantità spesso assai notevoli i prodotti dell'allevamento (formaggio e lana), i cereali (che nel XII secolo venivano esportati a Patmos), il vino eccetera. Era notevole anche l'esportazione di minerali, di legnami e di sale[5], scarsa al contrario quella dei prodotti dell'artigianato.

Dobbiamo riconoscere un'importanza particolare al ruolo che Creta aveva nei rapporti fra Bisanzio e le repubbliche marinare d'Italia, in fase di ascesa[6]. È stato osservato che i privilegi che Alessio I aveva concesso ai Veneziani, molto probabilmente nel 1082, non compren-

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5) *Ibid.*, p. 271 segg.

6) *Ibid.*, pp. 289-290.

devano Creta che non viene annoverata nell'elenco delle città e delle provincie per le quali erano in vigore tali privilegi. Apprendiamo dalla bolla d'oro di Manuele I del 1147 che in realtà Creta venne aggiunta ai paesi nei quali i Veneziani esercitavano i loro privilegi solo più tardi, ad opera di Giovanni II Comneno (1118-1143)[7]. Vale la pena notare in proposito che ancora una volta verifichiamo come gli elenchi dei luoghi nei quali erano in vigore privilegi o esenzioni e facilitazioni fiscali, avevano in sostanza (nonostante il loro carattere anonimo e privo di colore) un valore restrittivo che non veniva influenzato da generiche frasi come «anche in tutti gli altri castelli del mio regno»: formule frequenti queste nei privilegi imperiali. Nella bolla d'oro con i privilegi concessi ai Pisani nel 1111, al contrario, una lista del genere con i nomi delle città non appare e si è ipotizzato che essi avessero la libertà di esercitare i loro privilegi anche a Creta, tanto più che tra i luoghi che potevano visitare erano comprese «le isole» dell'Imperatore. È probabile che questo sia esatto, naturalmente nella presunzione che non ci fosse un'altra documentazione limitativa per i Pisani, a noi finora sconosciuta, contenente una precisa lista delle città.

Comunque stiano le cose, è certo che dal secolo XI in poi Creta era accessibile ai mercanti latini, ai Veneziani, ai Genovesi e ai Pisani. A tale proposito il recente studio di David Jacoby è particolarmente illuminante[8]. Dai pochi documenti rimasti e dalle informazioni fornite da fonti arabe ed ebraiche è possibile dimostrare che già in una prima fase, che giunge alla metà circa del XII secolo, i Veneziani e i Genovesi avevano avviato contatti commerciali stabili con l'isola in quanto erano interessati ai suoi prodotti, in particolare al formaggio e probabilmente al vino. Possiamo però verificare come con il trascorrere del tempo l'isola cominciasse ad essere utilizzata anche come stazione per il maggiore commercio con l'Egitto, peraltro senza mai cessare di essere una meta autonoma per gli scambi commerciali di portata minore. Del resto commercianti di Creta vengono menzionati nei documenti della Geniza del Cairo, cosa che dimostra come l'economia cretese stesse diventando sempre più complessa. Lo sviluppo dell'economia locale e i suoi legami con attività estranee all'Impero e alle sue sorti, spiegano perché a Creta i ritrovamenti di carattere numismatico, come abbiamo già visto, si mantengano a livelli alti anche nel periodo del declino della dinastia degli Angeli, alla vigilia della IV Crociata. L'incremento del commercio internazionale giustifica

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7) J. e P. ZEPOS, *Jus Graecoromanum*, I, Athina 1931, p. 372.

8) D. JACOBY, *Byzantine Crete in the Navigation and Trade Networks of Venice and Genoa*, in *Oriente e Occidente tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna: Studi in onore di Geo Pistarino*, a cura di L. BALLETTO, Genova 1997, I, pp. 517-540.

l'incremento della presenza di denaro. La commercializzazione di quantità sempre maggiori di prodotti agricoli spiega come tale presenza di denaro si espanda ad aree territoriali più ampie.

Attività del genere non potevano condurre se non alla prosperità che si manifesta anche nell'alto livello di istruzione che contraddistingue l'isola. Già nel secolo XI incontriamo un militare di Creta che si interessava di poesia[9]. Intorno al 1200 osserviamo come il livello culturale di Creta fosse infinitamente superiore a quello delle città costiere dell'Asia Minore come Efeso e Mileto[10].

La complessa vita economica della quale abbiamo parlato conduce, come è naturale, all'evoluzione nell'ambito statale di altri ruoli la cui presenza è indispensabile per il normale svolgimento delle attività economiche: i notai o *tabulari*. Pochi documenti privati di Creta si sono salvati. Una curiosa coincidenza però ci dà modo di constatare che anche in questo campo l'isola ha conosciuto una certa evoluzione.

Un contratto del 1118 fu steso dal *nomikos* di Candia, il diacono Nikitas Kontoris che era anche *logothetes* della chiesa metropolitana. I testimoni sono anch'essi per la maggior parte dei dignitari della chiesa metropolitana. Ci troviamo cioè davanti ad un comune contratto, rogato in un ambiente provinciale, e vediamo un alto esponente della chiesa dotato della capacità di certificare legalmente un atto, svolgendo un funzione di tipo notarile.

Verso la fine del secolo le cose mutarono in maniera radicale. Un contratto del 1193[11] venne stilato e sottoscritto da Michail Limenitis, sacerdote e tabulario dell'isola di Creta. Fra i testimoni, che sono persone della chiesa metropolitana, c'è anche un altro tabulario, Konstantinos Mouchlos. Un contratto del 1197 fu rogato a cura del primicerio dei tabulari di Creta, Andronikos Papandronikopoulos, e sottoscritto anch'esso da quattro tabulari due dei quali sono sacerdoti, uno semplice lettore e uno laico[12]. Un altro contratto del 1206 fu scritto da Michail Limenitis, a noi noto, sacerdote e tabulario dell'isola di Creta, e sottoscritto da altri due tabulari, ossia da Konstantinos Sachlikis, ecclesiastico dell'episcopato di Knosso (cioè di Candia) e da Ioannis Kotzanatos che era un laico[13].

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9) N. OIKONOMIDES, *Ο ταξιάρχης Κρήτης*, «Αριάδνη» 5 (1989), pp. 119-124.

10) N. OIKONOMIDES, *Η εγγραμματωσύνη των Κρητικών γύρω στο 1200*, in *Πεπραγμένα του Ζ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*, B/2, Rethimno 1995, pp. 593-598.

11) F. MIKLOSICH-J. MULLER, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi*, VI, Vindobonae 1890, p. 127.

12) *Ibid.*, p. 136.

13) *Ibid.* p. 151.

Abbiamo dunque un numero notevole di tabulari, certamente più di sei, che agiscono contemporaneamente e che hanno anche una loro organizzazione in quanto soggetti ad un primicerio per l'intera Creta, Andronikos Papandronikopoulos. Per la maggior parte sono membri della chiesa metropolitica o di altri episcopati ma vi sono pure alcuni laici. Tutti quelli che vengono citati nei nostri documenti hanno sede a Candia.

A Bisanzio nel periodo intermedio la professione del notaio, in linea con la tradizione romana, era controllata da vicino dallo stato, in modo particolare a Costantinopoli[14]. Il tabulario o tabellione era un funzionario pubblico, membro di una corporazione di grande prestigio che per parecchi anni si occupò di impartire l'istruzione legale a Costantinopoli. A capo della corporazione dei notai di Costantinopoli si trovava un primicerio che veniva nominato dallo stato. Il notaio aveva l'obbligo di controllare la legalità dei contratti compilati e di impartire consigli ai clienti. Non sembra che tenesse un suo registro con valore probatorio (*minutes notariales*) come accadeva per i notai occidentali, perché a Bisanzio il titolo giuridico principale, il «*dikaioma*» in quanto tale, era rappresentato dal contratto originale che rimaneva nelle mani di uno dei contraenti. Se c'era una contestazione sull'autenticità del contratto o dell'atto legale a cui esso si riferiva le autorità ricorrevano alla deposizione di testimoni, il principale dei quali era il notaio stesso. La sua sola testimonianza però non costituiva una prova sufficiente a dirimere il caso.

Nella Costantinopoli degli inizi del X secolo, quando venne pubblicato il *Libro dell'Eparco* di Leone il Saggio[15], c'erano in tutto ventiquattro sedi (*στατίονες*) di notai di solito annesse alle chiese, due in ogni «regione». Costantinopoli però rimaneva sempre una città straordinariamente grande, con una popolazione che di certo superava i 200.000 abitanti e che forse raggiungeva anche cifre di molto superiori tanto da stupire tutti i suoi visitatori. Era il più grande mercato della sua vastissima regione sia per l'attività di rivendita sia per quella artigianale, ed era altresì il maggiore centro di consumo a ovest di Bagdad. Se le necessità di scambio di una simile città potevano essere soddisfatte da 24 tabulari, che cosa dobbiamo pensare della Candia del 1200 che ne aveva almeno 6 e molto probabilmente un numero sostanzialmente maggiore?

Non si deve certo dimenticare che le attività economiche di tutto il Mediterraneo si erano parecchio intensificate all'avvicinarsi del 1200. Bisogna presumere che anche nella capitale bizantina fosse nel

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14) H. SARADI, *Le notariat byzantin du IXe au XVe siècles*, Athènes 1991.

15) Ed. J. KODER, Wien 1991, cap. I, par. 23.

frattempo venuta a crearsi la necessità di un numero maggiore di notai. L'osservazione fondamentale però, riguardo a Candia, permane. Per mantenere un numero così significativo di notai professionisti (tabulari), alcuni dei quali erano laici come a Costantinopoli, Candia doveva avere una vita economica molto intensa, degna di una grande città medievale. Senza dubbio il commercio assicurava una parte notevole degli introiti di questi notai.

Dal titolo di primicerio del resto si può dedurre che esisteva un'organizzazione unitaria di notai per l'intera Creta. Tutte le informazioni che si hanno riguardano Candia ma questo non significa che non ci fossero tabulari e *nomikoi* nel resto dell'isola. Il fatto però che questi funzionari periferici fossero uniti in una specifica organizzazione dimostra che le loro attività andavano ben oltre la semplice certificazione di compravendite a livello di contadini o anche di grossi proprietari.

Il commercio di Creta e il suo ruolo di approdo e di stazione per i viaggi d'oltremare avevano naturalmente Candia come centro principale ma trovavano spazio anche nel resto dell'isola, negli altri porti come Rettimo e Canea. Anche in tali luoghi era necessaria la presenza di bravi notai.

La prosperità economica di Creta spiega perché anch'essa conobbe il movimento separatista di Karykis. I suoi importanti rapporti internazionali, il commercio dei suoi prodotti e il suo ruolo come stazione per i grandi viaggi l'avevano resa nota alle potenze marinare in ascesa dell'Italia. E questo spiega l'interesse nei suoi confronti tanto da parte di Genova quanto di Venezia, interesse che con rapidità inaspettata si manifestò subito dopo il 1204[16].

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16) Vedi il recente articolo di CH. MALTEZOU, *Creta fra la Serenissima e la Superba*, in *Oriente e Occidente* cit., II, p. 763 segg.

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XX

Liens de vassalité dans un apanage byzantin du XII^{e} siècle

La discussion sur la féodalité à Byzance fut récemment ravivée à l'occasion du XIX^{e} Congrès International des Études Byzantines de Copenhague[1]. Comme dans le passé, les historiens se sont divisés en deux camps sur des positions arrêtées: d'une part, on a voulu définir la féodalité avec tant de précision qu'il est devenu impossible d'utiliser le terme pour quoi que se soit d'autre que la société ayant servi de modèle pour définir le système; de l'autre, on a adopté une définition plus large et moins précise, pouvant rendre compte de certains aspects au moins de ce que nous connaissons de Byzance. Cette deuxième acception me semble nous fournir un outil intellectuel plus utile et même nécessaire à la compréhension du Moyen Age oriental. En revanche, toute "hyper-définition" rend le concept stérile et conduit à des positions absurdes: n'a-t-on pas soutenu que le terme féodalisme correspond uniquement au système ayant prévalu dans la France du nord à la fin du XII^{e} – début du XIII^{e} siècle? N'est-on pas allé à l'extrême en soutenant que la féodalité est un concept inutile?[2]

Il n'y a pas de doute à mon avis: Byzance avait ses spécificités, la distinguant bien de la France ou de l'Allemagne médievalés. Il me semble aussi évident que le système d'exploitation économique ayant prévalu en Orient est pour l'essentiel le même avec celui qu'on connaît de la féodalité occidentale, alors que les rapports sociaux et administratifs diffèrent de façon radicale: le contraste le plus frappant se trouve dans l'absence, en Orient, de la pyramide sociale que créaient les inféodations successives liant par des liens personnels et économiques chaque individu à son supérieur immédiat, du simple paysan jusqu'au roi, en passant par les seigneurs féodaux de divers rangs. À Byzance, tout individu était lié directement à l'empereur par un serment de fidélité personnel; quiconque exigeait un serment de fidélité de la part de ses hommes, même s'il le faisait avec les meilleures des intentions, était considéré comme rebelle et puni en conséquence[3].

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[1] Round Table of 21 August 1996, on "Byzantine Feudalism Reconsidered", organized by J. Karayannopulos and Lj. Maksimović.

[2] E. A. R. Brown, *The Tyranny of a Construct: Feudalism and Historians of Medieval Europe*, AHR 79 (1974) 1063–1088.

[3] On consultera l'étude classique de N. Svoronos, Le serment de fidélité à l'empereur byzantin et sa signification constitutionnelle, REB 9 (1951) 106–142.

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Nous avons cependant trouvé quelques textes du XII^e siècle révélant les débuts timides d'une pyramide sociale: en 1118, le katépano de Crète déclare être "l'homme", c'est à dire le familier du grand duc Eumathios Philokalès qui, lui, était le familier de l'empereur[4]. Il y a encore quelques exemples d'un tel arrangement, montrant que l'idée de la pyramide sociale avait commencé alors à se développer dans l'empire d'Orient, justement au moment où avec la prise du pouvoir par la dynastie des Comnènes, la grande aristocratie traditionnelle triomphait sur la bureaucratie de Constantinople.

Cela reflète aussi une réalité économique. La floraison sociale de l'aristocratie était précédée par son important épanouissement économique, fondé sur la propriété foncière et, avec le temps, sur l'obtention de privilèges lui assurant une augmentation des revenus et la plaçant au dessus du pouvoir des fonctionnaires de l'état[5]. Déjà Basile II avait accordé à des grands de l'empire des provinces entières avec leurs revenus fiscaux: deux provinces au curopalate Bardas Skleros, trois villes avec leurs régions à Sénachereim de Vaspourakan qui s'était rallié à lui[6]. Alexis I^{er} avait donné tout le revenu fiscal de la Kassandra à son frère Adrien avant 1084[7]; Manuel I^{er} aurait donné un grand apanage dans la région de Stroumitza, au césar Jean Roger, qui en confia la gestion à son propre "homme", un certain Michel Tzagkitzakes[8].

Nous connaissons même un cas où une concession de terres par l'empereur est utilisée afin que le bénéficiaire crée sa propre clientèle. Nicéphore Mélissènos, après avoir convoité le trône, s'arrangea avec Alexis Comnène et se retira en recevant, en échange, le titre de césar et "la ville de Thessalonique" — c'est-à-dire, le revenu fiscal de la ville et de sa région, y compris les domaines de l'état s'y trouvant. Avec l'approbation de l'empereur, il céda en pleine propriété une partie de ces terres à des amis et compagnons, comme un certain Samuel Bourtzès, un parent, qui avait perdu ses propriétés en Asie Mineure à cause de l'invasion turque[9].

Nous avons donc ici un cas d'une sous-concession faite par un magnat à un

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[4] Fr. Miklosich et J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi*, VI, Vienne 1890, no. 23. Cf. N. Oikonomides, Οἱ αὐθένται τῶν Κρητικῶν τὸ 1118, Πεπραγμένα τοῦ Δ' Διεθνοῦς Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου, II, Athènes 1981, 308–317.

[5] Pour ce qui suit, voir N. Oikonomidès, Fiscalité et exemption fiscale à Byzance (IX^e–XI^e s.), Athènes 1996, 221–222.

[6] *Histoire de Yahya-ibn-Said d'Antioche*, éd. I. Kratchkovsky et A. Vasiliev (Patrologia Orientalis 23, 3), Paris 1932, 427; Ioannis Skylitzae, *Synopsis Historiarum*, éd. I. Thurn, Berlin–New York 1973, 355.

[7] *Actes de Lavra*, I, éd. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos et D. Papachryssanthou, Paris 1970, no. 46.

[8] B. Ferjančić, *Apanažni posed kesara Iovana Rogerija*, ZRVI 12 (1970) 193–201.

[9] *Actes de Docheiariou*, éd. N. Oikonomidès, Paris 1984, no. 4.

de ses hommes à partir de biens que l'empereur lui avait cédés. L'idée de la pyramide sociale sur le plan économique est évidente — une pyramide économique qui vient renforcer des liens sociaux, eux aussi de forme pyramidale.

Tant et aussi longtemps que les concessions de terres se faisaient à titre héréditaire, il s'agissait de donations servant naturellement les bénéficiaires, mais ayant des implications sociales limitées: à force d'être donnés, les immeubles disponibles se raréfiaient avec le temps, car l'état ne contrôlait plus ce qui était tenu à titre héréditaire par un particulier; par conséquent, ces donations, bien connues pendant les X^e^ et XI^e^ siècles comme récompense à des militaires ou à des fonctionnaires, ne pouvaient pas donner naissance à un véritable système, étant donné que par leur nature, elles conduisaient cette pratique à l'asphyxie.

Cela a changé au cours du XII^e^ siècle, avec l'épanouissement du système de la pronoia/oikonomia où la donation était liée dès le départ à un service spécifique. Pour récompenser un militaire ou un fonctionnaire, l'empereur lui cédait à titre viager un revenu fiscal; en réalité, dans la plupart des cas, il s'agissait d'un bien foncier avec ses cultivateurs, tous complètement exempts de tout impôt. Ainsi, le bénéficiaire de la pronoia se comportait comme s'il était devenu propriétaire terrien par donation, et qu'il était complètement exempt des charges fiscales: il touchait les impôts personnels de ses parèques ainsi que le loyer des terres qu'ils cultivaient sans payer quoi que ce soit à l'état. C'était là son revenu; en échange, il fournissait un service, militaire ou autre[10].

La principale innovation de la pronoia était que la cession se faisait à titre viager et non héréditaire. Les biens cédés revenaient à l'état après la mort (ou le renvoi pour autre cause) du bénéficiaire — et l'état pouvait par la suite les céder de nouveau à quelqu'un d'autre, remplaçant le pronoiaire défunt. Ainsi les biens restaient toujours à la disposition de l'état garantissant la récompense de plusieurs générations de serviteurs de l'empereur. Par le roulement continu de la possession des terres de l'état, la pronoia/oikonomia devint le principal système de financement d'une partie de l'armée et de l'administration pendant les trois derniers siècles de Byzance.

Les cessions révocables de terres à des militaires sont attestées des la fin du XI^e^ siècle[11]. Les cessions viagères (εἰς ἓν πρόσωπον) étaient elles aussi connues. Mais la combinaison des deux s'est généralisée pour les pronoiaires au cours du XII^e^ siècle. Ce régime a prévalu jusqu'à la fin du XIII^e^, lorsque, pour la première fois, l'idée de la pronoia héréditaire a fait son apparition. Ici, comme dans tant d'autres institutions byzantines, l'innovation réside dans la fréquence avec laquelle un procédé déjà connu est appliqué: ce qui était une exception devint la règle.

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[10] La bibliographie concernant la pronoia est longue. Elle a été passée en revue par A. Každan, *Pronoia. The History of a Scholarly Discussion*, MHR 10 (1995) 133–163.

[11] Par exemple, *Actes de Lavra*, I, no. 45. Cf. *Fiscalité et exemption fiscale*, 247. D'autres cas du XII^e^ siècle où des biens d'état passent d'un militaire à l'autre sont relevées par A. Každan et B. Fonkič, *Novoe izdanie aktov Lavry i ego značenie dlja Vizantinovedenija*, VV 34 (1973) 44.

Une autre caractéristique de la pronoia byzantine est qu'elle émanait toujours de l'empereur. C'était le souverain qui, par un document spécial, une *prostaxis*, la conférait; les fonctionnaires des provinces la remettaient au bénéficiaire en exécution de cette ordonnance impériale. De cette façon le principe centralisateur de l'empire d'Orient, voulant que tout fonctionnaire ou militaire soit lié directement à l'empereur, était sauvegardé. C'est là un point sur lequel la pronoia se différencie clairement du fief, qui connaissait bien le statut des *subfeudatari*: en Occident, il était normal qu'un seigneur féodal, tenant son fief du roi, puisse inféoder un de ses subordonnés sur une partie de son fief, que celui-ci à son tour puisse inféoder ses propres subordonnés, et ainsi de suite jusqu'au plus bas échelon de la société.

Le but du présent article est de signaler un cas où quelque chose de semblable est attesté à Byzance en plein XII^e^ siècle, et d'évaluer l'importance de cette information pour notre compréhension du système des liens économiques et sociaux prévalant alors dans l'empire d'Orient.

En 1152, le sébastokratôr Isaac Comnène, oncle de l'empereur Manuel I^er^, fonda le monastère de la Vierge Kosmosoteira à Bèra (Pherrai, en Thrace occidentale) pour s'y faire enterrer, et le dota richement. Il délivra aussi au monastère un règlement (*typikon*) décrivant la vie spirituelle et liturgique, les règles de la discipline, l'organisation administrative, les privilèges dont l'institution jouirait et les obligations qu'elle remplirait envers lui, les fêtes qu'il fallait absolument observer, bref tout ce qui concernait sa vie et son fonctionnement[12]. Ce document contient aussi une énumération des biens donnés au monastère par le fondateur[13].

La provenance de ces biens est décrite dans le typikon de façon équivoque: ἐκ γονικῆς κληροδοσίας χρυσοβούλλοις λόγοις τε καὶ κελεύσεσι. Première hypothèse: Une partie de ces biens appartenait à Isaac Comnène à titre héréditaire (donc provenait des propriétés de la famille des Comnènes) alors qu'une autre provenait de donations impériales faites par chrysobulles ou par ordonnances. Deuxième hypothèse: son père (Alexis I^er^ Comnène) lui avait attribué ces biens en pleine propriété en lui délivrant des chrysobulles et des ordonnances.

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[12] Le typikon de la Kosmosoteira est publié par L. Petit, *Typikon du monastère de Kosmosotira près d'Ainos (1152)*, IRAIK 13 (1908) 17–77. Cf. ODB I, 282–283.

[13] *Typikon*, 52–53, § 69.

Cette deuxième interprétation me semble plus vraisemblable parce que (a) ces biens contiennent aussi des droits incorporels de l'état, comme le basilikaton et le phoundax de Sagoudaous, le droit de posséder des bateaux, certains exempts de tout impôt, des droits sur une foire et sur la pêche dans certaines rivières[14]; (b) ils sont assimilés mais nettement distingués des biens attachés par Isaac Comnène, ce qui montre qu'ils étaient tout tenus en pleine propriété mais avaient des provenances de nature différente[15]; (c) il est question d'un bien dont l'usage (χρῆσις) appartenait alors à un certain Aspietes, mais qui passerait après sa mort aux biens du sébastokratôr suivant une ordonnance impériale — donc d'un bien de type pronoiaire qui serait donné au sébastokratôr après la mort de son détenteur[16]; (d) les biens contiennent des villages de soldats (ἐστρατευμένα) et des forteresses (κάστρον)[17].

Autrement dit, je comprends qu'il s'agit, pour la plupart, de biens et droits du fisc donnés par Alexis Ier à son fils le sébastokratôr en apanage, auxquels celui-ci a ajouté quelques biens qu'il a achetés. Il les tenait en pleine propriété, puisqu'il pouvait les donner à sa fondation à titre perpétuel; il pouvait aussi les vendre[18]. Ceci n'est que naturel, étant donné que les propriétés traditionelles de la famille des Comnènes se trouvaient en Paphlagonie et non point en Thrace, et qu'Alexis Comnène est connu pour avoir distribué les biens du fisc aux membres de sa famille de façon tellement excessive qu'elle poussa Jean Zonaras à crier au scandale[19].

Or, du texte du typikon il ressort clairement qu'Isaac avait aussi donné des terres à plusieurs de ses subordonnés. Il avait fait des donations à titre perpétuel, et les nouveaux propriétaires avaient besoin de titres écrits en règle afin de pouvoir défendre leurs biens[20]. Le passage n'est point explicite et nous ne savons pas dans quelles conditions ces donations étaient faites.

Mais il existe des cas où nous voyons qu'Isaac Comnène avait des liens de vassalage avec certains de ses hommes. Il a déjà été remarqué[21] qu'au moment même de la création du couvent, le sébastokratôr s'était assuré que certains de ses hommes seraient bien traités par les moines et qu'ils continueraient à servir l'higoumène avec la même ferveur et fidelité qu'ils avaient pour lui-même. Il s'agit de son secrétaire Michel et de son fidèle Léon Kastamonitès[22]. Ces deux hommes sont aussi chargés de la tutelle de Konstintzès, un jeune homme qui avait été élevé et doté par le sébastokratôr, jusqu'à ce qu'il atteigne l'âge de vingt-quatre ans. Il s'agit donc d'hommes de confiance.

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[14] *Typikon*, 52, l. 32–34; 53, l. 3–5.

[15] *Typikon*, 53, l. 3.

[16] *Typikon*, 52, l. 17–20.

[17] *Typikon*, 52, l. 29.

[18] *Typikon*, 52, l. 32: εἰ οὐ πραθῇ ἐν τῇ ζωῇ μου.

[19] Jean Zonaras, *Epitome Historiarum*, éd. Bonn, III, 767.

[20] *Typikon*, 53, l. 14–17.

[21] V. Arutjunova-Fidanjan, *Tipik Grigorija Pakurjana*, Erevan 1978, 32–34.

Or, dans l'énumération des biens donnés au couvent, nous retrouvons ces personnages avec d'autres, dans un contexte présentant un intérêt tout à fait particulier[23].

1. Nous apprenons que le secrétaire du sébastokratôr, Michel, avait reçu de la part de son maître des biens à Traianoupolis. Il les tenait probablement en pleine propriété.
2. Par contre Konstintzès, le jeune protégé du sébastokratôr, aurait été doté d'une certaine quantité de biens avec le droit de les transmettre à ses enfants, s'il en avait; sinon, après sa mort, ces biens passeraient au couvent. À l'évidence, il ne pouvait pas aliéner ses biens d'une autre façon.
3. Nous apprenons que Kastamonitès avait reçu le domaine (*proasteion*) de Galatou et le village de Tzernikou. Il est stipulé qu'après sa mort, tous ces biens passeraient au couvent.
4. Le pinkernès Constantin, c'est-à-dire l'échanson du sébastokratôr, possédait le village de Radabountos; après sa mort, le village passerait au couvent.
5. Un certain Nicétas Romanitès possédait le village de Kerkizos, qui passerait aussi au couvent après sa mort.

Il est évident que le sébastokratôr avait disposé de parties de son apanage pour gratifier ses hommes de trois façons différentes:

a) Donation de biens en pleine propriété: c'est le cas no.1, du secrétaire Michel.

b) Donation de biens avec limitations: c'est le cas no. 2, de Kostintzès, qui peut les transmettre par héritage mais non point par voie de vente, ou donation etc. Cette particularité s'explique, je crois, du fait que Konstintzès est lié par adoption; le sébastokratôr veut bien lui assurer une vie décente, à lui et à sa progéniture, mais il ne veut point le laisser gaspiller sa dotation, sur laquelle les ascendants (= le sébastokratôr, et, par son intermédiaire, le couvent) avaient toujours des droits, s'il n'y avait pas de descendants.

c) Donation viagère du revenu de certains biens: ce sont les cas no. 3–5, où il s'agit de serviteurs du sébastokratôr qui, au lieu d'un salaire, avaient reçu un ou deux domaines chacun, dont ils encaissaient les revenus de toute sorte — sans doute considérables, puisqu'il s'agissait de villages entiers.

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[22] *Typikon*, 26, l. 10 et suiv.; 74, l. 7 et suiv.

[23] *Typikon*, 52, l. 34–53, l. 5.

Ce dernier cas est le plus important pour nous, car il s'agit de cessions faites aux serviteurs à titre viager et non héréditaire; autrement dit, il s'agit de donations conditionnelles valables pour aussi longtemps que les bénéficiaires fournissaient le service convenu au sébastokratôr ou à son remplaçant désigné, en l'occurrence le couvent. Mais après leur mort, leurs biens redeviendraient propriété du sébastokratôr, qui, par le typikon, les cédait au couvent. C'était là un arrangement qui ne différait pas beaucoup de la pronoia, dans le sens qu'il s'agissait d'une donation d'un revenu, viagère, liée a un service.

Il est évident que les arrangements pris par Isaac Comnène reflètent la situation de transition prévalant au milieu du XII^e^ siècle. Dans son apanage il a agi de la même façon que l'empereur agissait dans le reste de l'empire. D'une part, il faisait des donations en pleine propriété, comme les empereurs le faisaient depuis longtemps pour récompenser leurs fidèles; de l'autre, il faisait des donations conditionnelles et viagères, tout à fait comparables aux pronoiai, pour récompenser d'autres serviteurs. Dans cette époque de transition, il utilisait l'ancienne mode aussi bien que la nouvelle.

Autrement dit, à l'intérieur de son apanage, le sébastokratôr se comportait envers ses hommes de la même façon et selon les mêmes procédés que le basileus dans le reste de l'empire. Les cessions de biens que nous avons mentionnées peuvent bien apparaître comme des inféodations de second degré — comme un premier pas vers cette fameuse pyramide économique et sociale caractéristique de la féodalité; et le secrétaire Michel, Léon Kastamonitès et les autres peuvent apparaître comme des vassaux du sébastokratôr.

L'institution, examinée de façon ponctuelle, fait penser au modèle occidental; l'image d'ensemble diffère considérablement. Des cas, comme celui que nous venons de signaler, ont sans doute existé à Byzance plus souvent que ne l'attestent nos sources documentaires, d'origine monastique pour la plupart. Mais il semblerait que leur fréquence soit restée faible et que, par conséquent, il n'y ait jamais eu de changement qualitatif dans le fonctionnement de l'institution: il ne semble pas y avoir eu à Byzance d'inféodation de troisième degré. La distribution des pronoiai est toujours restée l'affaire de l'empereur. Les quelques exceptions que nous relevons ne font que confirmer la règle.

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XXI

Life and Society in Eleventh Century Constantinople

The poet *Christophoros Mitylenaios* was a man with many curiosities. Born and raised in Constantinople, he spent most of his life in this city. He was a prolific writer and very successful at that. Using the metrical forms that the Byzantines had inherited from antiquity as well as those that they developed, he wrote thousands of poems, mainly epigrams, to all the saints, and composed several metrical calendars of the whole year. Some have been translated into slavic, others have been introduced into the standard liturgical manuscripts and all met with remarkable success and are preserved in many codices[1]).

He also wrote epigrams of varying length and metrical styles concerning persons and events of his times. Most of them are preserved in a unique, fifteenth century manuscript of Grottaferrata, which has been partly destroyed by mice. But thanks to some independent copies of individual poems, we now have intelligible (often complete) texts of two thirds of them. Their importance for the historian has already attracted some attention[2]). We shall examine them once again from a different point of view, using the critical edition of Kurtz (to be quoted by the letter K followed by the number of each poem)[3]).

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[1]) Enrica Follieri, I calendari in metro innografico di Cristoforo Mitileneo. I–II, Bruxelles 1980. In the introduction to this monumental publication, one will find a synthesis of what is known about the author and detailed bibliographical references. More recent publications: eadem, Un Bollandista „ante litteram“: Cristoforo Mitileneo, in: Studi Bizantini e Neogreci. Galatina 1983, p. 279–284. — C. Crimi, Graeca et bizantina. Catania 1983; idem, Identificazione di un frammento di anacreonteo, *Studi di filologia bizantina* III (Catania 1985), p. 15–21; idem, Recuperi cristoforei, *Bollettino della Badia greca di Grottaferrata* 39 (1985), p. 233–242.

[2]) Enrica Follieri, Le poesie di Cristoforo Mitileneo come fonte storica, *Zbornik Radova Viz. Inst.* 8/2 (1964) (Mélanges G. Ostrogorsky II), p. 133–148.

[3]) E. Kurtz, Die Gedichte des Christophoros Mitylenaios. Leipzig 1903. We now have an italian translation with commentary of this collection: Cristoforo di Mitilene, Canzoniere. By A. Anastasi, C. Crimi, R. Gentile. Catania 1983. — The present paper is a by-product of a seminar on Christophoros Mitylenaios, conducted at the University of Athens in 1988, in collaboration with my colleagues A. *Kominis* and P. *Vokotopoulos*.

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It has long been remarked that in the Grottaferrata manuscript the poems are arranged in chronological order. Some of them, referring to historical events, can be dated with precision: K 8 to 1034, K 18, 19, 24 to 1034–1041, K 22 to ca. 1039, K 49 to December 1041, K 52 to April 1042, K 54, 55 to 1042/43, K 61 to March/April 1043, K 65 to 1043, K 70 to ca. 1045, K 95 to ca. 1047/48, K 143 to after 1068. *Christophoros* lost an adult brother, ca. 1040 (K 44), then his mother while his father was still alive, ca. 1042 (K 57–60), then a sister, ca. 1045–47 (K 75–79). We may thus conclude that he must have been born within the first fifteen years of the eleventh century.

He grew up in the parish of Saint Protasios, in the region of Strategion, close to the administrative centre of the Byzantine capital (K 36, 114). He may have frequented the neighbouring school of Saint Theodore of Sphorakiou (see infra). He started writing poetry quite early (one of his metrical calendars was ready in the forties of the century: K 83). To make a living, he entered the public service as an imperial scribe (*hypographeus*: K 114), and was probably attached to the financial service called *sakelle*[4]). He held office as a judge (with mainly fiscal responsibilities) twice in the Pontus (in the province of Paphlagonia and in that of the Armeniakoi). In Paphlagonia, he already occupied a distinguished social position as his honorific title was that of patrician; later he was promoted to *anthypatos* (i.e. honorific proconsul); one may assume that he did not climb any further in the hierarchy, as these two titles, patrician and *anthypatos*, are the highest ones mentioned in the manuscripts preserving his works. This was a successful — not an outstanding — career for an 11th century civil servant[5]).

The Grottaferrata manuscript is obviously an anthology of poems. Their chronological arrangement suggests that they were copied from a register in which *Christophoros* kept duplicates of (all?) his poetical works. The criteria of the selection are not known to us, but one may assume that they must have mostly been aesthetic and philological (success in applying the classical rules of grammar, syntax and metric) rather than related to the interest that a specific poem might present at a given moment. The only message that the anthologist wanted to convey when putting together the model of the Grottaferrata manuscript, was to show off this remarkable know-how in versification.

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[4]) This is a hypothesis based upon the fact that *Christophoros* wrote a poem for the image of Christ Pantokrator depicted on the dome of the palace room called the Oatos, which served for storing the archives of the neighbouring *sakelle*, and presumably was not accessible to the general public. In the twelfth century, the Oatos contained also the archives of another financial service, of the *genikon*: see F. Dölger, Beiträge zur Geschichte byzantinischer Finanzverwaltung. Leipzig 1927, p. 26, note 1.

[5]) The combination of titles patrician and judge of Paphlagonia is attested in the titles of codd. Marcianus Nannianus 182 and Parisinus gr. 396: J. Darrouzès, in *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* 16 (1958), p. 67. More detailed information is provided in the manuscript of Grottaferrata and several others that mention him both as *anthypatos* and as patrician. — In cod. Mosquensis 353 (Arhimandrit Vladimir, Sistematičeskoe opisanie rukopisej moskovskoj sinodal'noj biblioteki. Moscow 1894, p. 514) *Christophoros* is mentioned as patrician and *hypatos*, which is a plausible combination; one may wonder though whether this is not the result of a scribal error for *anthypatos*.

Most of *Christophoros'* poems were written in response to concrete situations with a view to publication. The genre was very much in fashion during the eleventh century; famous Byzantine scholars, such as *Michael Psellos* and *John Mauropous* wrote epigrams on the same or similar subjects as *Christophoros* but their compositions are considerably more limited in range. With biting irony or with generous praise, always in an impeccable and metrically correct Greek, *Christophoros* addresses specific circumstances of his time and provides us with a series of snapshots that enliven eleventh century Constantinopolitan society and allow us to work out his attitudes towards it.

Everyday life. — In *Christophoros'* poetry there is a keen interest in real life, its sorrows but also its pleasures. On the one hand, he writes poems in order to mourn dead relatives and friends (44, 57–60[6]), 75–77, 119) or the "femme fatale" of his times, the mistress of the emperor, *Maria Skleraina* who was granted the special new title of *sebaste* (respectable, august) and whose demise would have "deprived the world of all Grace" (K 70). Many epigrams were written to be engraved on tombs, one of which (inside a church?) was decorated with portraits of the owner, represented as a layman and as a monk (K 16, 104, 107, 119). *Christophoros* also tries to comfort the sick, questioning the competence of the doctors, that he does not hold in high esteem (K 22, 85, 119, 142). But on the other hand his poems concerning pleasant things are by far more numerous. He writes about fruit or sweets or perfumes, or wine, or utensils or even luxurious decorated textiles (K 28, 42, 43, 45, 87, 88, 94, 99, 105, 110, 115, 117). He glorifies the relaxing pleasures of the bath (K 53). He sings the praises of the opposite sex: a certain *Eudocia*, "the most beautiful of all women", in whom he might have been personally interested (K 66, 67); or a young lady (a relative of his?) who was about to be engaged (K 81); he alludes to unfaithful wives (K 31, 84). Having nothing else to do, he enjoys the singing sparrows (K 48) or he watches the spiders and the ants at work and expresses admiration for their achievements (K 122, 125); or he is inventing riddles, so necessary to fill the long winter evenings, and puts them to verse. Or else he indulges in some domestic gambling: one poem concerns the game of *tablion* (something like to-days backgammon) with its dice[7]), a symbol of the instability of life (K 73). He is pleased with his house, but he complains about the mice that eat up his food reserves as well as his books (K 103) and about the owl that keeps him awake at night (K 131). He seems to feel uncomfortable in a boat because he is afraid of the sea (K 109), yet he goes fishing (K 127). He comments on works of art (K 15, 16, 28, 50, 51, 93, 95, 98, 101, 106, 133, 143⁸)) and has contacts with painters (K 112). He draws constant pleasure from going to shows given by professional actors or mimes (K 138).

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[6]) For these poems cf. Crimi, Graeca et bizantina, p. 45–50 (Motivi epigrammatici nei carmi sul eco).

[7]) Cf. Ph. Koukoules, Byzantinon Bios kai Politismos. I/1, Athens 1948, p. 200–204.

He spends part of his life in the muddy (K 132) streets and on the paved ones, where religious processions take place, such as the one that went on 6 October from Saint Sophia to the forum of Constantine and to the church of Saint Thomas of Amantiou[9]): once, this procession turned into a riot, and many participants got burnt by the candles while others were beaten up by the mace-brandishing police of the *pantheotai* (K 1).

He also follows the ceremonial processions of the emperor (K 24) and seems to have participated to public festivities with pagan origins, such as the *broumalia* (K 115), which included masked parades[10]). And he describes another similar parade that used to take place on the 25 of October, on the feast of the two notaries who achieved sainthood, *Markianos* and *Martyrios*[11]): it was organized by the students of the school of notaries, together with their teachers[12]). The poem describing it (K 136) is poorly preserved, yet it shows a masquerade, in which the students paraded, some on horseback others on foot, wearing borrowed luxurious garments and crowns of onions and garlics; they behaved indecently, like actors ("those deceivers of the scene", 1. 81) and ate all kinds of fruit and sweets, drawing the applause and the criticisms of the spectators. Such lively street scenes were certainly frequent: a parade of women — may-be of organized female workers — is also described by *Michael Psellos*[13]).

Christophoros' passion seems to have been the hippodrome. He was obviously a fan of the Green faction. He wrote an epigram (K 8) ridiculing a Blue

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[8]) On this poem, cf. Crimi, Recuperi cristoforei, p. 241–242.

[9]) R. Janin, La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin I/3. Les églises et les monastères. Paris 1969, p. 250.

[10]) D. Antonijević, Vizantijske brumalije i savremene maskirane povorke balkanskih naroda, *Balcanica* 10 (1979), p. 99–129 (with English summary).

[11]) This parade went on for more than a century, until patriarch *Loukas Chrysoberges* (1156–1169) forbade it. See the commentary of *Balsamon* to canon 62 of the Council in Trullo.

[12]) K 136. A detailed study on the notarioi and their studies is to be found in Helen Saradi-Mendelovici, Le notariat byzantin du IXe au XVe siècle (still unpublished doctoral dissertation, 1986, University of Montreal).

[13]) See Angeliki Laiou, The Festival of „Agathe". Comments on the Life of Constantinopolitan Women, in: Byzantium. Tribute to Andreas Stratos. I, Athens 1986, P. 111–122.

charioteer who lost control at a turn and broke his chariot[14]). Such partisan poetry related to the hippodrome was not uncommon: we have many epigrams of all periods down to the tenth century extolling the exploits of individual charioteers and in the twelfth century *Theodore Prodromos* wrote a poem explaining to caesar *Nikephoros Bryennios* how red and green were far superior colours to blue and white[15]) — an obvious reference to the factions (*demoi*), where the Greens and Reds were associated in their opposition to the Blues and Whites.

Mitylenaios also wrote later an epigram (K 50) expressing admiration for one bronze horse of the hippodrome, probably one of those now decorating the façade of the church of San Marco in Venice[16]). On another occasion, he went to the hippodrome while some other regular supporters were out of town, and wrote for them a long poem (125 poorly preserved verses: K 90) about the whole event[17]): a vivid description of the preparations and of the actual race, with the chants, the shouting and whistling, the manoeuvres of the contestants and the final triumph of the Green charioteer. Another piece of partisan literature: this poet was quite a fan[18]).

The circle of the intellectuals. — Because of his strong classical education, *Christophoros* was interested in his colleagues, the scholars. Three of his earliest poems (9, 10, 11) are related to literary contests that took place in Constantinople between the best students of competing schools under the supervision of the emperor himself. On the occasion of such a contest *Christophoros* took a very strong stand in favour of the school of Saint Theodore of Sphorakiou, generously praising its personnel and its students. On the other hand, he violently denounced the (rival?) school of (the Virgin of) Chalkoprateia, in which, says-he, the *schede*, i. e. the rhetorical exercises that the students were supposed to prepare by themselves, were sold to them by their own professor[19]).

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[14]) The accident occured close to the place where the two organs of the *demoi* were placed together in the eleventh century (cf. also K 90, 1. 54) — while in the tenth they used to be placed in two opposite parts of the arena (Koukoules, Byzantinon Bios, III, p. 23). Judging from the title, one may assume that this happened during a *chryson hippodromion,* i.e. the races traditionally held in the week following Easter Sunday (ibidem, p. 30).

[15]) Migne, Patrologia Graeca 133, p. 1007 ff.

[16]) See C. Crimi, Graeca et bizantina, p. 35–40 (Sul cavallo bronzeo descritto da *Cristoforo di Mitilene*).

[17]) He is not the only one known for such an exploit. In 1168, another public official, the grand *logothete Michael Hagiotheodorites,* wrote a similar poem for the sake of friends who lived in the province: K. Horna, Eine unedierte Rede des Konstantinos Manasses, *Wiener Studien* 28 (1906), p. 195–197.

[18]) See Koukoules, Byzantinon Bios, III, p. 7–80; L. Bréhier, La civilisation byzantine. Paris 1950, p. 93–103; R. Guilland, Etudes de topographie de Constantinople byzantine. Berlin, Amsterdam 1969; R. Janin, Constantinople byzantine. Paris 1964, p. 183–194. Interesting — and new — details provided by the poem of *Mitylenaios*: the running surface of the hippodrome had, at its beginning at least, five (if not six) lanes and gates (1.15) but later narrowed because of a wall (1.38); the selection of the lanes was done according to a complicated system in which random drawing by lots (1.17) was combined with deliberate selection (1.13).

In these schools as well as in the one for notaries (K 136, 1. 195, 209) only two faculty members are mentioned: the *maistor* or *didaskalos*, who did the actual teaching of literature and rhetoric and was credited with the success of the students; and the *proximos* (assessor) or *paidagogos* (educator) a man of culture who was compared to the column that held the institution together, and who obviously was in charge of discipline and of general education. This division of tasks, that appears for the first time in Byzantium in this poem, seems to have been common in mediaeval Western Europe as well[20]); this is quite remarkable, as one would hardly have thought that the educational systems in East and West might have such close similarities in organization despite their fundamentally different origins and objectives.

It might be worth noting here that the Sphorakiou quarter, where the "good" school of St. Theodore lay, was quite close to *Mitylenaios'* home, while the Chalkoprateia were considerably further away. It is not impossible that his attitude on this issue might have been inspired by a certain neighbourhood solidarity or even by the fact that he himself might have been an alumnus of the school of Saint Theodore. Be that as it may, it is clear that these literary competitions generated considerable interest and partisan participation in the community of Constantinopolitan literati.

With age, *Christophoros'* school memories and animosities faded away and were replaced by new career related animosities. He now accuses some of his colleagues of committing grammatical or stylistic mistakes (K 23), or for their penchant for wine (K 37), of for their incompetence which added to the dismal level of the studies (K 40). But the exchange of writings between scholars continued (K 64, 78, 79, 84), as did the exchange of compliments and praise (K 27, 97, 100) and of invective: in one poem, *Christophoros* brags about the devastating effectiveness of his verbal attacks, which inflict wounds like javelins (K 36).

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[19]) On these contests and on the *schede* see P. Lemerle, Cing études sur le XIe siècle byzantin. Paris 1977, p. 227ff.; and H. Hunger, Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner. II, München 1978, p. 25ff. (with bibliography). More recent studies: R. Anastasi, A proposito del carme 70L di Giovanni Mauropode, in: Studi in onore di F. M. Pontani. Padova 1984, p. 243–246; and idem, Ancora su Anna Comnena e la schedografia, *Studi di filologia bizantina* III, p. 77–95.

[20]) It is well attested in Western Europe. See P. Riché, Les écoles et l'enseignement dans Occident chrétien de la fin du Ve au milieu du XIe s. Paris 1979, p. 195ff.

The circle of the clerics. — *Christophoros* lived in the time of Patriarch *Michael Keroullarios*, one of the chief protagonists of the Schism (1054), the strong personality known for his unsuccessful attempts to dominate Emperor *Isaac I*. At such times, one would expect that Byzantine society, generally perceived in our times as being dominated by ecclesiastics, would be going through a period of religious fervour. Nothing of the kind. The Great Schism is hardly mentioned by the historians of the period; and eleventh century intellectuals were mainly interested in classical culture and the revival of philosophy, while the man of the street enjoyed the new well-being that came with peace and with the opening of new markets. Religion remained an important part of life and the church enjoyed social power and spiritual prestige — but it did not by any means dominate all aspects of peoples' lives.

Church activities are constantly present in *Christophoros*' poems; but it is their social rather than spiritual functions that seem to dominate. The poet was not a particularly devout person. Like many of his contemporaries, starting with *Michael Psellos*, his references to the divine are neither forthcoming nor frequent. He often refers to saints' icons and to saints' feasts, and celebrates the building of new churches (K 12, 95). He also speaks of cantors and their conductor (K 129), of Lent regulations and of distributions of food (K 102, 128), of exchanges of visits on festive occasions (K 124), festive decorations of churches (K 32), and processions (K 1). Although a layman, he shows a considerable interest in churchmen. He praises high positioned ecclesiastics mainly for their culture (K 27, 43, 61), without insisting at all on their theological achievements or personal virtue. And he complains of the low intellectual level of the newly hired secular clergy of a big church (undoubtedly Hagia Sophia: K 63)[21]), clerics who came from the lower strata of society, from the merchants and craftsmen of the capital. He criticizes the monks of the monastery tou Manouel for their unbecoming headpieces (K 120)[22]), and the ones of the monastery tou Proedrou for indulging in tasty food (K 135)[23]. Playing with the name of the monk *Mourzoul*, he accuses him of simplemindedness (K 4)[24]. He intervenes in favour of an old lady who wanted to become a nun in a monastery of the Virgin (K 144). He praises monasticism as an expedient way of saving one's soul, especially for people who embrace it shortly before their death (K 16, 49), but nowhere does he utter a word of himself, or of any member of his family, ever taking the habit. The major problems of his times concerning dogma or church hierarchy are well beyond his preoccupations.

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[21]) Judging from its place in the collection, the epigram should date from the reign of *Constantine Monomachos*. But its state of preservation does not allow us to say with certainty to which church this clergy was attached. Yet, as we know that this emperor had made important donations to Hagia Sophia, one of which intended to assure that mass would be sung in it every day — leading to the massive hiring of new personnel — it is very probable that the new clergy of the Great church was the object of *Christophoros*' criticism. *Constantine*'s donation had probably been recorded in a chrysobull — the one that is represented in the famous Hagia Sophia gallery mosaic: cf. N. Oikonomides, The Mosaic Panel of Constantine IX and Zoe in Saint Sophia, *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* 36 (1978), p. 222–225. The numerous clergy of Saint Sophia still created problems at the end of the eleventh century: P. Gautier, L'édit d'Alexis ler Comnène sur la reforme du clergé, *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* 31 (1973), p. 165–201.

[22]) Cf. Crimi, Recuperi cristoforei, p. 233–238. On the monastery, see Janin, Eglises, p. 320–322.

He opposes the extremes to which blind faith can lead in a very long poem (in 135 twelve-syllable verses) against the monk *Andreas* "who buys as real relics the bones of plain people and who finds acceptable the existence of too many limbs belonging to one and the same saint" (K 114)[25]. The title tells already the essential part of the story.

The cult of relics has always been a major manifestation of Byzantine piety[26]. Constantinople was admired by all Christians because of the number and quality of these "records of the sufferings of the saints", some of which had arrived there in relatively recent times, as precious spolia of victorious campaigns against the Arabs. No one ever questioned the authenticity of some of them, especially after the defeat of Iconoclasm, a movement that had opposed not only icons but also relics[27]. *Christophoros* himself wrote an epigram to praise a relic of *Saint Panteleimon*, known for its miraculous healings (K 89). But the case of the monk *Andreas* was quite different.

Yet one has to stress that nowhere was this monk accused of being an impostor or of trying to take advantage of the fake relics that he acquired. On the contrary. He only spent and never received money for them (cf. 1. 62, 63, 69, 70). He acted always in "faith", in good faith, and never had doubts about the relics that he bought (1. 17–18). *Christophoros* ridiculed this faith in two instances (1. 17ff., 87ff.), in the second of which he took astonishing liberties with the well known passage of the gospel about faith moving mountains (Matth. 17, 20).

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[23] On the monastery see Janin, Eglises, p. 58–59 and V. Laurent, Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin. V/2, Paris 1965, nos 1141 and 1185.

[24] D. Goutas, professor of Arabic at the University of Crete, kindly informed me that the Arabic word *mourzoul* means the simple-minded person.

[25] Attention to this poem has been drawn recently by A. Každan and Ann Wharton Epstein, Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Century. University of California Press 1985, p. 95–96.

[26] Bréhier, Civilisation, p. 258; H.-G. Beck, Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich. München 1959, p. 275; A. Frolow, La relique de la vraie croix. Paris 1961. A general survey of the cult of relics in the middle ages with a good bibliography is provided by Th. Head, Relics, *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* 10 (1988), p. 296–299.

[27] See the nuances introduced in this discussion by J. Wortley, Iconoclasm and Leipsanoclasm: Leo III, Constantine V and the Relics, *Byzantinische Forschungen* 8 (1982), p. 253–279.

Yet the attitude of *Andreas* was not necessarily the result solely of simplemindedness. At the suggestion that, if he was not interested in authenticity, he could as well collect bones from any cemetery, he would have answered that obtaining them for free would deprive him of the Lord's compensation (1. 66: *misthos*; cf. Matth. 5, 12 et al.). In other words, *Andreas* could also be seen as a man with a coherent theory, based (a) on unlimited and unquestioning faith and (b) on personal sacrifice (here: financial sacrifice). One cannot help thinking of the rebirth of mysticism in the early 11th century and of the paramount importance that was then granted to blind faith as well as to the ideal of personal sacrifice. It is thus possible that, although marginal, *Andreas* might represent a poorly known trend in eleventh century monasticism[28]), which was seen by many as a laughing stock.

Politics and society. — One tends to think that a monarchy would not accept the expression of political opinions, especially those in opposition to the official one. Yet, *Christophoros* seems to have felt free to express his views: he praised the ruler (K 18, 19, 24, 54) but sometimes he also went against the stream. In his poem for the death of *Romanos III* (1034), he clearly showed his disapproval of the way in which many Byzantines (including the empress *Zoe* and the City's high society) hastened to forget the deceased emperor in order to support his successor, *Michael IV* (K 8). Things are even more striking in the quite flattering epigram (K 65) that *Christophoros* wrote for the rebel *Maniakes* shortly after his death on the battlefield — an epigram in which this pretender to the throne is described as the last Byzantine of valour, and this while *Constantine IX Monomachos*, against whom *Maniakes* had rebelled, was still reigning unchallenged in Constantinople. Uttering a politically dissenting opinion in eleventh century Byzantium was not unthinkable after all.

The people surrounding *Christophoros* who are mentioned in his poems mostly belong to his own social rank and status: mainly middle level civil servants, but also educators, scholars, ecclesiastics and monks. Rarely does he speak of persons who had really made it to the top position of their field, such as the governor of Constantinople (*eparchos*) *John* (K 30) or the supervisor of the port (*parathalassites*) and judge *Melias* (K 15, 16) who had previously been the director of a prison (*domestikos ton teicheon*). Even rarer are references to the military, whose virtual absence from *Christophoros*' entourage reflects a more general attitude.

Only one soldier ist mentioned, *John* (K 38), not for any achievement but because, being greedy, he snatched away the belongings of his fellow soldiers.

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[28]) Sincere veneration of relics, even inauthentic ones, if done in ignorance, seems to have been accepted by some in Mediaeval Western Europe: Head, Relics, p. 298.

Christophoros was writing in a period of generalized peace and he intended to glorify it (K 28). This was the mainstream attitude of eleventh century Constantinopolitans, who lived with the "illusion of a lasting peace" and chose to demobilize the empire, and to use foreign mercenaries for the defensive tasks in the periphery[29]). Already at that time, the inhabitants of the capital had started considering themselves as somehow different from the rest of the empire, were interested in having a good time and tended to ignore the problems of the provinces[30]). Another eleventh century scholar and public servant, *John Mauropous*, also insisted on the ideas of the lasting peace and of the special status for Constantinople and its inhabitants[31]). They were all members of the upper middle class of functionaries, proud of their urban origins, habits and mentality.

And this mentality still separated them from the other major component of the capital's population, the members of the guilds. *Christophoros* speaks several times of the merchants and craftsmen of Constantinople. He wrote an epigram for an iron-merchant who was in contact with the emperor himself (K 62); he mentions the butchers (K 64), the bakers and the greengrocers, the tavern-keepers and the cooks, the shoemakers and the sievemakers, the seamen and the fishermen, the construction workers (K 63). But while he speaks with admiration for the weaving and the cooking of women, who work at home (K 28, 42), whenever he refers to the guilds' people, he does it with a touch of revulsion at their lack of manners and of education. This was the haughty attitude of the traditional Byzantine public servant towards those who did not share his background and whose professions were considered as vile since the Roman times. For the members of the guilds, social acceptance would come only later, towards the end of *Christophoros*' life, when the emperors opened the senate to them.

Another concept which is virtually absent from *Christophoros*' poetry is that of "high birth". Only once does he use a term alluding to the noble ancestry (*eupatrides*: K 27, 1.20) of a person whose other, concrete, qualities are profusely described in the same poem: good education, talent as a writer, high connections, commanding general respect, etc. This is another predictable attitude for an eleventh century constantinopolitan bureaucrat. This social group could not claim long and glorious lineages (as did the provincial aristocracy). Instead it stressed the system that had existed for a long time and which controlled social ascent through the acquisition of imperial titles: this is beautifully illustrated in poem K 55[32]).

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[29]) Lemerle, Cinq études, p. 263–271.

[30]) Hélène Ahrweiler, L'idéologie politique de l'empire byzantin. Paris 1975, p. 64–66.

[31]) Ibidem, p. 54–55.

[32]) See also Crimi, Graeca et bizantina, p. 41–43 (Una consonanza tra Giovanni Geometra e Cristoforo di Mitilene).

It is addressed to the emperor *Constantine Monomachos* on behalf of *John Hypsinous* an otherwise unknown *protospatharios* (this was his middleranking honorific title). It is said, with plenty of puns and jokes and references to antiquity, that the emperor had profusely distributed not only gold but also honours; but *Hypsinous* had not himself received a promotion, and was asking for one. The poem recalls the wide distribution of salaries and titles that this emperor made at the beginning of his reign, after opening the senate to the public servants[33]. *Michael Psellos* in particular, insists on the dual nature of these distributions (titles-money) and points out that such promotions were given mainly to those who demanded with insistence or to those who made a good joke to the emperor[34]. *Christophoros*' poem thus may well have been one of these demands, intended to provoke the emperors generosity by appealing also to his sence of humour.

Criticism of society. — According to *Christophoros*, greediness, at various levels, seems to be the main social illness. In the prevailing scale of values of eleventh century Constantinopolitans, striving for economic well being was considered paramount, independently from the means that were used to achieve it. As it has already been remarked on the basis of other sources, "wealth was a basis for social stratification"[35]. But this principle did not necessarily meet with general approval — and definitely not with that of *Mitylenaios*.

The judge of Hellas, *Basil Xeros*, is accused of having dried up this previously wealthy province[36]. This is a pun on the family name of the judge, which means "dry", and also underscores the sufferings, all too common in the eleventh century, to which the inhabitants of the provinces were subjected by the fiscal administrators.

Members of high society, such as a dignitary of the Church (*sunkellos*), probably related to the family of *Argyropoulos*[37], and a certain *Lykoleon*[38] removed the icon of Saint Cyrus from the church of the middle-class Strategion, where it belonged, and took it to a house in the Kynegion, close to the palace and the monastery of Mangana, a rising part of the city in these early years of *Constantine Monomachos; Christophoros,* who also lived in the Strategion, wrote one (poorly preserved) poem (K 68) in an effort to bring back the icon for the spiritual as well as the material well being of the quarter; interestingly enough, he seems to have been acting as a representative of his neighbourhood.

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[33] Lemerle, Cing Etudes, p. 287 ff.

[34] Michel Psellos, Chronographie. Ed. E. Renauld. I, Paris 1926, p. 132.

[35] A. Každan and G. Constable, People and Power in Byzantium. Washington D.C. 1982, p. 159.

[36] A. Bon, Le Péloponnèse byzantin jusqu'en 1204. Paris 1951, p. 194–195, mentions several judges of Hellas and Peloponnesos named *Basil* and known from their seals: one was a *protospatharios* (no. 39), another, with the family name *Xeros*, was *vestarches* (no. 42).

[37] Otherwise unidentifiable but belonging to one of the foremost families of Constantinople: J. F. Vannier, Familles byzantines. Les Argyroi. Paris 1975, p. 50–51.

[38] A vestes, known to have been the founder of a church and a donor to pious foundations: *Neos Hellenomnemon* 14 (1917), p. 5–10, 13.

When there was a fire at the buildings of the cemetery of Saint Luke, in the western part of the City, grave-diggers and undertakers found the opportunity to plunder the corpses with impunity (presumably those awaiting burial) in order to sell their garments (K 82). This expression of unholy greediness, provides the opportunity for several puns related to spiritual punishment and to the fire of hell that would be visited upon the perpetrators. It also says something about the society and its non-respect of traditional taboos.

Already in these poems, one can discern the distinction between the grabbing of the powerful, done openly from a position of strength, and the anarchic plundering characteristic of the lower strata of society. In both cases, material goods are at stake. *Christophoros'* sympathies are clear. He is very much against the rich man who "gapes for money as a cat gapes for suet" and buries his gold to hide it (K 134). On the contrary, he shows compassion for a certain *Leon* who lived in abject poverty: paraphrasing a well known passage of *Gregory of Nazianzus*[39]), he describes him as being "without a dime, without a stick, without shoes, without a second dress" and concludes that, although involuntarily, *Leon* lives the life of an apostle (K 29). This is a sarcastic comment on the standard church attitude comforting the poor with the promise of heaven, while reassuring the rich that salvation was very much within their grasp[40]). And although one cannot be certain that this poem was written for a real person and not for a ficticious one[41]), the general attitude of questioning some social inequality is obviously present.

This critical attitude is much more pronounced and seems to have attained an articulate level in one of *Christophoros'* earliest poems (K 13), from the mid-thirties of the century. It bears the title "*Eis ten tou biou anisoteta*" which literally means "to the unequality of life". One should remember though that two key words of this title have double meanings: *anisotes* can be translated as unequality or as inequity; and *bios* can be translated as life or as fortune. The poem, that is summarized here, shows clearly that both meanings were in the author's mind[42]).

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[39]) Migne, PG 36, p. 649 and 37, 1180, commented upon by *Maxismus the Confessor,* Migne, PG 91, p. 1368ff.

[40]) The essential texts on this issue are put together by Dom H. Leclercq, art. „richesse“ in: Dictionnaire d'Archéologie chrétienne et de Liturgie. 14/2, Paris 1948, p. 2414–2419.

[41]) The title „*eis ton ptochon Leonta*“ brings to mind the well-known story of the *Ptocholeon,* on which see H. G. Beck, Geschichte der byzantinischen Volksliteratur. München 1975, p. 148–150. The tale of *Ptocholeon,* as is preserved to-day in many versions and in manuscripts dating from the 15th century and later, provides no clues for identifying the *Leo* of the epigram with the one of the tale. But it is not impossible that *Christophoros* might have had an earlier version of the tale in mind.

"Lord, if men are made of the same dust and share the same nature, how is it that they differ in their *bios*? Of course, things do not stay put, they do change, but how and when? In the most convoluted and disorderly times, it happens that out of a thousand or of ten thousand rich men, one goes down; and out of thirty thousand miserable paupers, three succeed and join the upper lot. The quest of justice burns me, Lord, and I speak to you; please hear my moans with your usual forbearance. What can one say? that you created the one with your own hands while the other has a different creator? aren't we all made by your fingers? Yet some enjoy not only what is necessary but much more, including the superfluous; while the others strive for one-bite morsels or even for sheer crumbs. Is this equity? how long are you going to keep our world standing? Unleash a quake or another deluge but without a second ark or a new Noah: all should disappear, not leaving any remains. Now if, as you promised (Gen. 8, 21), you do not want to inundate the earth again, just hit Atlas with your hand and with him destroy all the world, mix the earth to the firmament. This would make for general equality."

The raw materials of *Christophoros'* reasoning are predictable. In the Bible (Prov. 22,2) it is said that both rich and poor are made by God and *St. Gregory of Nazianzus* explained that this was done in absolute equality. The ecclesiastical and patristic traditions, though, accepted the disparities and tried to discourage rapacity and encourage charity among the rich; and to discourage contest and to encourage endurance among the poor[43]). *Christophoros'* extremist conclusion, is undoubtedly inspired by the funeral service, yet it is something quite new. Not only does it show an obvious sensibility to the social problems but also an attitude of revolt — not of revolution, obviously, as the whole poem is addressed to God himself. His complaints for the limited vertical mobility of society, echo similar remarks contained in tenth century imperial novellae, issued in order to curb the excesses of the wealthy and powerful at the expense of the peasants; the emperor *Basil II* (996) estimated that the prosperity of one family might well last for a whole century[44]. One tends to think that Byzantine society before and after the year 1000 might well have been going through a period of stability (if not stagnation), right at the moment when new social groups, "those who recently started thriving" (including the merchants and craftsmen of Constantinople) were preparing to rise in society and to enter the senatorial aristocracy.

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[42]) Attention to this poem has already been drawn by Každan-Epstein, Change, p. 210.

[43]) After the major studies on poverty in the Middle Ages done or inspired by M. Mollat, the bibliography on the subject has increased considerably. See M. Mollat, Etudes sur l'histoire de la pauvreté. Paris 1974; idem, The Poor in the Middle Ages. Yale Univ. Press 1986 (translation from the French edition, published in 1978); P. Brown — O. Capitani — F. Cardini, e.a., Povertà e carità dalla Roma tardo-antica al 700 Italiano. Abano Terme 1983, esp. p. 36–64 (O. Capitani, Tendenze della Storiografia sulla Povertà nel Medioevo, oggi: important bibliographical presentation). A complete survey of the relationship between rich and poor, from the Bible and the church fathers all the way down to the twentieth century, assorted with rich bibliographies, is to be found in the article „pauvreté chrétienne" (by several authors) in the Dictionnaire de Spiritualité. 12, Paris 1984, p. 613–697. For Byzantium (only the early period) see Evelyne Patlagean, Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, 4e–7e siècles. Paris 1977.

Be that as it may, it is obvious that this poem was only a youthful cry of protest of no consequence. In spite of the fact that the objections towards the rich had not disappeared (K 134), *Christophoros*, who in the meantime had also made a good career, turned towards philanthropy and lauded the advantages of the hospitals that not only cured diseases but also — and above all — cured the effects of poverty (K 130). Moreover, his rebellion was conceived within the framework of pure orthodoxy; it did not deviate towards heresy[45] nor did it contest any fundamentals of Byzantine society. These limitations meant that, although the economic and social aspects of social inequity were perceived and expressed, and an ideological framework was being sought, no realistic solution was proposed.

In spite of all these shortcomings, *Christophoros'* attitude was, for the 11th c., something new. The only Byzantine parallel that one can quote comes from a 14th century literatus, *Alexios Makrembolites*. He also addressed the problem of social inequity but without asking for any intervention on the part of God; in his times, he could see His punishment coming in the form of the Ottoman Turks[46].

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[44] I. and P. Zepos, Jus Graecoromanum. I, Athens 1931, p. 264.

[45] The only phrase of the poem that might be interpreted as taking some distance from the right faith, is the question whether the poor might have been created by someone else than God; this brings to mind the dualistic heresies, that viewed this world as the work of Satan. But this still seems far fetched.

[46] I. Ševčenko, Alexios Makrembolites and his „Dialogue between the Rich and the Poor", *Zbornik Radova* 6 (1960), p. 187–229.

XXII

The Contents of the Byzantine House from the Eleventh to the Fifteenth Century

Byzantine studies at the University of Athens live with the legacy of many prominent figures. Among the most significant is Phaidon Koukoules who, singlehandedly so to speak, took up the awesome task of writing the basic book on the private life of the Byzantines. In several volumes, material from the Greek and non-Greek medieval sources is deployed with one basic purpose: to show the unbroken continuity of the Greeks from antiquity, through Byzantium, to modern times.[1]

This lack of chronological nuance and the belittling of outside influence have often been denounced as weaknesses in Koukoules' monumental opus.[2] Yet his works have not been replaced, or even challenged or contested, and they provide a very solid (and very much exploited) basis for all those who read Greek and research the private life of the Byzantines. I am much indebted to his pioneering and impressive works, in spite of the unfavorable reactions that his method—or lack of it—provokes, especially when authors far removed from each other in time are cited in the same footnote. He has provided a mine of material; it is up to us to use it as best we can, possibly adopting a different approach.

Koukoules describes the contents of the Byzantine house in exceptional detail.[3] Yet one may ask: what was the relationship between the exhaustive list of objects mentioned in his works and real Byzantine houses? Did they ordinarily contain all these objects?

When speaking of the house in general, one has to specify the time period to be examined (in our case, the existing documentation imposes the period from the 11th to the 15th century) and the kind of house that one means. After some thought, I decided that there was no point (and no way, for lack of sources) in looking into the huts of the destitute, which were virtually empty. Poor peasants no doubt constituted a large percentage—in certain periods, the majority—of the Byzantine emperor's subjects, but their dwellings lack interest because they certainly contained very little.

Nor should we look into the imperial palace and the mansions of the few extremely wealthy families. One may easily assume that in these dwellings one would find all—or almost all—the objects that are known to have existed by then. Moreover, this top-level elite tended to respect ancient tradition in spite of changes that had been imposed in the meantime. We know, for example, from Liutprand of Cremona, that in the tenth century official meals at the palace were normally served to seated guests, following the normal practice of the times, except for the banquets held in the hall of the nineteen akkoubitoi, where guests reclined on

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[1] His two major publications, which crowned a large number of articles in international journals, are: Ph. Koukoules, Βυζαντινῶν Βίος ϰαὶ Πολιτισμός, 6 vols. (two of which were divided into two parts) and an appendix (Athens, 1948–55) (hereafter Koukoules, *Life*); and Θεσσαλονίϰης Εὐσταθίου τὰ Λαογϱαφιϰά, 2 vols. (Athens, 1950).

[2] E.g., C. Mango, "Daily Life in Byzantium," *JÖB* 31 (1981), 337 ff. Interest in everyday life has recently increased. See A. Berger, *Das Bad in der byzantinischen Zeit* (Munich, 1982); A. Karpozilos, "Realia in Byzantine Epistolography X–XII c.," *BZ* 77 (1984), 20–37; J. Haldon, "Everyday Life in Byzantium: Some Problems of Approach," *BMGS* 10 (1986), 51–72; P. Magdalino, "The Literary Perception of Everyday Life in Byzantium: Some General Considerations and the Case of John Apokaukos," *BSl* 48 (1987), 28–38; and the recent major works of Ph. Ariès and G. Duby, *Histoire de la vie privée*, I. *De l'empire romain à l'an mil* (Paris, 1985), and of P. Veyne, *A History of Private Life*, I. *From Rome to Byzantium* (Cambridge Mass., 1987).

[3] Koukoules, *Life*, II/2, 61–116 (household furnishings); IV, 249–317 (the house); V, 136–205 (lunch, dinner, feast). See also Koukoules, Θεσσαλονίϰης Εὐσταθίου, I, 47–103, chaps. 1 (the house), 2 (heating and lighting), and 3 (household furnishings).

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couches, according to the ancient custom.[4] A less praiseworthy practice of the few, also related to ancient tradition, was to decorate their houses with obscene paintings and plaster statuettes, the presence of which was still denounced in the late twelfth century by Theodore Balsamon.[5] All this was definitely out of what one could call "mainstream" Byzantium.

We are thus led to focus on middle-class households, those of affluent landowners, church or state officials of various levels, and monks and founders of small monasteries, living mostly in the provinces.

How can one describe the contents of an average middle-class Byzantine house? Obviously, one has to concentrate on specific kinds of sources that describe concrete situations and households; one must deliberately ignore all texts that refer to theoretical or ideal situations, especially the otherwise very important lexicographical works or commentaries on ancient texts, which tend to be exhaustive and, by the same token, deceptive, at least so far as our purposes are concerned.

We must find sources that describe actual everyday life. The lives of saints are of primary importance in this respect, since they usually provide domestic details in the most mundane terms as they try to add veracity to their story. They often describe a particular section of society—monastic communities—in which poverty was seen as normal and desirable, but they also describe the homes of laymen.

A different kind of document, much more important because it is more comprehensive, is to be found in the few Byzantine archives that we have. I am referring to the lists of objects contained in wills, in acts of transfer of authority over a household or a monastery, or the lists drafted after one's death in order to establish certain rights of succession. These bring to mind the famous "inventaires après décès" that have been successfully used in studying everyday life in western Europe.

These documents describe in detail the contents of a household—at least most of the noteworthy contents—and sometimes mention their fair market value. Thus one can see the main purpose that each object served: utilitarian, aesthetic, investment and speculation, or a combination of these. What were the real contents of these houses, the οἰκοσκευή (as it was then and is still called today),[6] or the οἰκοσκευικά,[7] ὁσπιτική ὕλη,[8] or βιωτικὴ ὕλη?[9]

My curiosity about the contents of other peoples' houses was first aroused by a fourteenth-century document preserved in the archives of the Athonite monastery of Docheiariou. It tells a sad story: Manuel Deblitzenos, a heavily armed horseman of the regiment of Thessalonica, was killed by the Turks at Chortiates in 1384. His widow, after due mourning but within the legal time limit of three months, took the steps necessary to assure her control over the fortune left by her late husband. She went to the tribunal and requested that she be guaranteed the protection that Roman and Byzantine law granted to the widow, that is, that she be granted priority over all other people in recovering what had been given to her as a dowry at the time of her marriage, increased by a premium (ὑπόβολον) of one-third its value.

A special tribunal of church officials was formed by the metropolitan of Thessalonica for that purpose. It proceeded according to law and, with the help of two experts, the Thessalonian archontes Demetrios Phoberes and John Maroules, established the fair value of the movable goods that were found in the household of the Deblitzenoi, taking into consideration the original cost of the goods as well as their subsequent wear and tear. The list thus drafted is very detailed—in theory it is exhaustive, since the widow was told that she would be excommunicated if she had hidden any movable or immovable property. And in fact, we find items of rather insignificant value, such as iron rings with glass stones, and bottles that are worth less than one gold coin (hyperpyron) each. The only things that might have been omitted were those of negligible value.[10]

This was quite an affluent household. Maria's dowry had been 1,584 gold coins and her husband's revenue must have been at least 70–80 gold coins a year (this amount was the normal revenue of the horsemen of Thessalonica), not to speak of the rents that he drew from his private estates.

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[4] Koukoules, *Life*, V, 168.

[5] G. Rhalles and M. Potles, Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων, 6 vols. (Athens, 1852–59), II, 546.

[6] Koukoules, *Life*, II/2, 61.

[7] G. Theocharides, Μία δίκη καὶ μία διαθήκη βυζαντινή (Thessalonike, 1962), no. 2, l. 125.

[8] F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi*, 6 vols. (Vienna, 1860–90) (hereafter MM), II, 475 (also called βιωτικὰ εἴδη).

[9] MM, I, 283, cf. 281.

[10] *Actes de Docheiariou*, ed. N. Oikonomides (Paris, 1984), no. 49

This economic well-being is reflected in the list of movable property, which include several luxury items. But, after reading the entire list, one is struck by the absence of some very basic items of household equipment: no beds, tables, chairs, or cutlery are mentioned in this enumeration which, as I mentioned, is very detailed and includes items of relatively small value. The items that are missing were certainly not of the kind that could be hidden from the eyes of the commission; if they are not mentioned, they obviously did not exist in this house.

A wealthy house with no beds, tables, or chairs? This could well raise some eyebrows; it invites verification. Thus one is obliged to look for other comparable documents. I found some, very few, coming from the heartland of Byzantium, between western Asia Minor and Macedonia.[11] They are listed here in chronological order according to the exact or approximate date of each document, followed by the place where it was issued, a very brief summary of its contents, and my estimate as to what degree this list is complete.

1017 Hierissos. The koubouklesios Stephanos gives to the nun Maria, his daughter, the monastery of the Virgin, with all its buildings and many pieces of land, as well as some movable goods. This is her share of the paternal heritage (εἰς κλῆρον καὶ μερίδα σου). The pieces of movable property enumerated here obviously correspond to what she would need when leaving the paternal house in view of moving to live by herself in the monastery.[12]

Ca. 1119, Patmos. Resignation of Sabbas, higoumenos of the monastery of St. John the Theologian, who bequeaths to it many books and other movable goods, probably the contents of the little monastery of the Archangel that he had founded. Very comprehensive list.[13]

1142 Mount Athos. Inventory of the movable property of the monastery of Xylourgou, drafted by a commission of monks from Karyes on the occasion of the nomination of a new higoumenos. This list, although confused, must be exhaustive. It is supplemented by the list of (the mostly sacred) objects given to the monastery by the monk Lazaros.[14]

1233 Mantaia (to the east of Smyrna). List of the movable property of the abandoned monastery of St. Panteleimon established on the occasion of its being given to the monastery of Lembos. The list should be exhaustive.[15]

1247 near Philadelpheia (modern Alaşehir). Will of the monk Maximos, founder of the monastery of the Virgin Koteine in the neighborhood of Philadelpheia. It contains an (exhaustive?) enumeration of the movable goods of the monastery.[16]

1255 monastery of Lembos (to the east of Smyrna). Will of the monk Maximos Planites in which he enumerates his movable goods as well as those that he left at his mother's house when he received the monastic habit. The list seems to be exhaustive.[17]

1270–74 Hermeleia (in Chalkidiki). Will of the monk Theodosios Skaranos, member of the local gentry, in favor of the monastery of Xeropotamou, enumerating all his real estate and movable property. The list seems to be exhaustive.[18]

1284 monastery of Lembos(?). Will of the tzaousios George Melissenos donating to the monastery all his real estate and movable goods. The list seems to be exhaustive.[19]

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[11] I purposely avoided documents from southern Italy and Sicily, which were no longer Byzantine in the time period that interests me. I also avoided documents concerning the top level of society and other special cases. Thus I have deliberately omitted (1) the will of Kale Pakouriane, kouropalatissa and member of the Constantinopolitan élite (1098), in which we have a long list of luxury items and a summary of household equipment: *Actes d'Iviron,* II, ed. J. Lefort, N. Oikonomides, and D. Papachryssanthou (Paris, 1990), no. 47; (2) the regulations of the monastic hospitals of Pantokrator in Constantinople (1136) or the Kosmosoteira at Ainos (1152): P. Gautier, "Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator," *REB* 32 (1974), 1–131 (lists at lines 905, 925–36 [sleeping equipment], 1057–62, 1147–48 [bathing and cooking equipment], 1104 [serving equipment], and L. Petit, "Typikon du monastère de Kosmosotira près d'Aenos (1152)," *IRAIK* 13 (1908), 17–77 (lists on p. 53, lines 36–39 [sleeping equipment] and p. 54, lines 37–38 [serving equipment]); and (3) documents with obviously very selective lists, such as the will of the monk Gerontios (1219/34): MM, IV, 201–3, or the enumeration of the contents of the Virgin Gabaliotissa established in 1375 for the despot Thomas Preljubović: *Actes de Lavra,* ed. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos, and D. Papachryssanthou (Paris, 1970–82), III, no. 147.

[12] *Actes de Lavra,* I, no. 23 (list at lines 14–17).

[13] Text in MM, VI, 241–46. I have prepared a new transcription of the document in view of its new edition (list at lines 1–29 [books], 29–32, 78–86 [movable goods] of the original document).

[14] *Actes de Saint Pantéléèmôn,* ed. P. Lemerle, G. Dagron, and S. Ćirković (Paris, 1982), no. 7, passim.

[15] MM, IV, 56–57.

[16] I have used the edition of M. Gedeon, Διαθήκη Μαξίμου μοναχοῦ, κτίτορος τῆς ἐν Λυδίᾳ μονῆς Κοτινῆς (1247), Μικρασιατικὰ Χρονικά 2 (1939), 271–91. The document was previously published by S. Eustratiades in Ἑλληνικά 3 (1930), 325–39.

[17] MM, IV, 74–75.

[18] The document is preserved in two versions without major variants of substance: *Actes de Xéropotamou,* ed. J. Bompaire (Paris, 1964), no. 9.

[19] MM, IV, 266–67. The donor died shortly after drafting his will, presumably in the monastery: H. Ahrweiler, "L'histoire et

TABLE 1

	1017	1119	1142	1233	1247	1255	1270	1284	1314	1325	1365	1394	1400	1401
chests			*		*	*	*		*			*		
sleeping equipment	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
beds		*					*							
bathing equipment	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
garments, belts						*			*		*	*	*	*
icons			*	*	*		*			*		*	*	*
jewels			*			*			*	*	*	*		*
books			*	*	*		*							*
tools			*	*	*		*	*		*				
weapons			*			*				*			*	
kitchenware	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*
jars, barrels	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*				
serving equipment		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
plates, glasses		*	*	*			*	*					*	
cutlery			*							*			*	
tables		*		*	*		*						*	
chairs			*				*							

1314 Thessalonica. Will of Theodore Karavas with a detailed list of his real estate and movable goods. The list is detailed but not exhaustive, since Theodore mentions in a summary fashion pieces of property that were already given to his married children and other property that was to be inherited by his (still living) wife.[20]

1325 Beroia. Will of the skouterios Theodore Sarantenos endowing the monastery of St. John the Baptist, which he had founded. Very detailed list of movable goods.[21]

Ca. 1365, Constantinople. Agreement concerning the dowry that was received by a certain Theodore. The document is preserved under the title πρoὶξ Θεοδώρου in the minutes of a Constantinopolitan notary, together with documents of the year 1365. Since this document is a contract, the list of items promised to the groom must be exhaustive.[22]

1394 Thessalonica. Detailed inventory of all the belongings left by Manuel Deblitzenos, made in order to restore to his widow what she was entitled to because of her dowry. Exhaustive list.[23]

1400 Constantinople. The patriarch authorizes Andronikos Trichas to take possession of his paternal inheritance, which was until then under trusteeship because Andronikos was not of age. Exhaustive list.[24]

1401 Constantinople. Exhaustive enumeration of the movable goods that should have been part of the dowry given to a certain Kontodoukas, who was from Selybria.[25]

This is a limited and random group of sources: fourteen documents that cover four centuries and a vast region. But this is all we have.[26] I shall try to proceed by grouping the available information according to the possible uses for the various items. For a general image of the contents of these lists, see Table 1.

Many households included *chests,* in Greek κιβώτια or, from the Latin, κασσέλαι, or from the

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la géographie de la région de Smyrne entre les deux occupations turques (1081–1317) particulièrement au XIIIe siècle," *TM* 1 (1965), 172.

[20] *Actes de Chilandar,* ed. L. Petit and B. Korablev, *VizVrem* 17 (1911), Priloženie 1, no. 27

[21] Theocharides, Μία δίκη, 17–28, list on 19–20 (I checked the readings against a photograph of the original document, preserved in Vatopedi).

[22] G. Ferrari, "Registro vaticano di atti bizantini di diritto privato," *SBN* 4 (1935), 265.

[23] *Actes de Docheiariou,* no. 49, cf. above.

[24] MM, II, 406–7.

[25] MM, II, 504–5.

[26] Similar documents exist for earlier periods, beyond the scope of the present study, and attention has been drawn to their lexicographic interest: J. Diethart, "Lexikalische Rara in drei byzantinischen Mitgift- und Heiratsgutlisten des 6.-8. Jh. aus der Wiener Papyrussammlung," *JÖB* 33 (1983), 7–14.

Arabo-Turkish name, σεντούκια. They were worth anywhere from 2 to 10 gold coins (hyperpyra); they were obviously used for storing and protecting food, garments, and other utensils, including precious objects (titles of property, books, or even cash[27]). It is conceivable that all of an individual's possessions could be held in one such chest, and a small one at that.[28]

Sleeping equipment appears in all the above lists. The most common items are rugs (τάπητες . . . εἰς ὕπνον[29]) used in lieu of pallets or mattresses (ἐπεύχια) or the mattresses[30] themselves (πιλωτά[31] or ὑπαπλώματα[32]), and of course the various covers, blankets, usually of wool, often imitating animal fur (and then called, as they are today, βελεσικόν), or of real animal furs. Sometimes quilts are mentioned, filled with wool, some covered with silk material. Pillows are common, some also covered with silk.[33] All this appears consistently as the main category of household goods. It is also one of the most expensive, with values ranging from 2 to 32 gold coins (hyperpyra),[34] second in value only to high-quality jewelry. Occasionally one also finds, as in the case of the Deblitzenoi, curtains and canopies, which were suspended from the ceiling of the sleeping quarters to protect their owner from insects and from curious onlookers.

But, contrary to the above, and in spite of it, *beds* are very seldom mentioned in these documents. In only two lists, one drafted on the island of Patmos (early 12th century) and the other in Hermeleia of Chalkidiki (late 13th), beds appear; they are κραββάτια συμβαλτά or ἐξηλωμένα, that is, composite beds, which one could disassemble and store in a corner. It is recommended that they be used with mattresses, and, in the case of the monastic list from Patmos, it is clearly specified that they should be placed mainly at the disposal of the sick[35] and of visitors, especially of distinguished visitors. In other words, the use of beds is described as being exceptional. This would explain why they are not mentioned with the normal equipment of Byzantine houses. On the contrary, beds are mentioned in the imperial palace and presumably existed in the lesser palaces of the nobility.

But of course beds were not at all unknown even in the lower strata of society. In the lives of saints as well as in the twelfth-century poems of Theodore Prodromos,[36] the poor and the ascetic monks sleep either on mats or, at times, on animal skins, while those better off, or those less inclined to hardship, use a mattress or a sleeping rug (also called prayer rug, ἐπεύχιον, τάπης ἐπευκτικός[37]), or sometimes also a κοιτάριον, or couch. Pallets, called σκίμποδες, are also often mentioned, and were mainly used for the sick or as litters to take the dead to burial.[38] Yet sleeping directly on the floor is always considered exceptional, something that only monks accustomed to hardship would regularly practice—monks and the occasional imitator, such as Emperor Nikephoros Phokas in 969.

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[27] Titles of property: *Xéropotamou*, no. 9A, lines 35–36; MM, II, 309; books: *Byzantion* 31 (1961), 139; cash: MM, IV, 398, and A. Dmitrievskij, *Opisanie liturgičeskih rukopisej hranjaščihsja v bibliotekah pravoslavnago vostoka*, I, Τυπικά (Kiev, 1895), 729; garments, icons: MM, I, 539.

[28] MM, I, 281.

[29] C. Sathas, Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη, IV (Venice, 1872), 339.

[30] PG 105, col. 893: a "high" mattress (ὑψηλὴ στρωμνή). For an earlier period see H. Harrauer, "Matrazen für die Gefangene," *APf* 33 (1987), 69–72.

[31] On the term, see *JÖB* 36 (1986), 361.

[32] Mention of a χρυσοῦν ὑφάπλωμα in *AB* 54 (1936), 62.

[33] Cf., e.g., a pillow cover (προσκεφαλοένδυσις) worth 5 hyperpyra: MM, II, 474. Cf. *ActaSS*, Nov. III, 572 (πάλλιον . .τάξιν μηλωτῆς ἀποπληροῦν, used as a pillow).

[34] In MM, II, 481–83 there is question of a bedcover (κρεβατοστρώσιν) worth 6 hyperpyra. I assume that the κρεβατοστρώσιν was composed of the "blankets with their mattresses" (σκεπάσματα καὶ τὰς ὑποστρώσεις αὐτῶν): H. Delehaye, *Deux typica byzantins de l'époque des Pqléologues* (Brussels, 1921), 57.

[35] Beds are also mentioned as being standard equipment of the monastic hospitals of Pantokrator and Kosmosoteira, cf. above, note 11. See also the typikon of Gregory Pakourianos, para. 29, 2 (beds in a hostel) and Delehaye, *Deux typica*, 134.

[36] E.g., D. Hesseling and H. Pernot, *Poèmes prodromiques en grec vulgaire* (Amsterdam, 1910), 32, 35; I. A. Heikel, "Ignatii diaconi Vita Tarasii archiepiscopi CP," *Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae* 17 (1891), 401; A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Žitija dvuh vselenskih patriarhov XIV v.," *Zapiski Ist. Filol. Fakulteta Imp. Univ.* 76 (1905), 5 (distinction between κλίνη and σκίμπους); V. Laurent, *La vie merveilleuse de Saint Pierre d'Atroa* (Brussels, 1956), 199; H. Delehaye, *Les saints stylites* (Brussels, 1923), 167–68; *ActaSS*, July VI, 601; Sept. VIII, 813; Nov. III, 523; and Nov. IV, 646; A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Monumenta graeca et latina ad historiam Photii patriarchae pertinentia* (St. Petersburg, 1899), 3; B. Vasilevskij, "Life of St. Meletios," in *Pravoslavnij Palestinskij Sbornik* 6.2 (1886), 9; "Life of Basil the Younger," ed. A. Veselovskij, in *Sbornik otdelenija russkago jazyka . . . imp. akad. nauk* 46 (1889–90), 48, 51 (σκίμπους), 62, 75; I. Hausherr, *Vie de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien par Nicétas Stéthatos* (Rome, 1928), 34; *AB* 41 (1923), 304; PG 100, col. 129; ibid., 120, cols. 45, 161; ibid., 151, col. 608. It should be added though that it is impossible to know the exact meaning of the word κλίνη in all instances; sometimes it is clear that it is a separate piece of furniture since it is also called σκάμνος or κοιτάριον; in other cases this is not at all certain, and it could as well designate the permanent couch along the wall: see below, p. 210 and note 39.

[37] B. Latyšev, "Methodii patriarchae CP Vita S. Theophanis Conf.," *Zapiski Rossijskoj Akademii Nauk* ser. 8, 13.4 (1918), 7; PG 111, col. 705; E. Kurtz, "Zwei griechische Texte über die hl. Theophano, die Gemahlin Kaisers Leo VI.," *MASP*, ser. 8, 3.2 (1898), 15; E. Sargologos, *La Vie de Saint Cyrille le Philéote* (Brussels, 1964), 249.

[38] Heikel, "Ignatii diaconi," 421; Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Žitija dvuh," 5, 144, cf. 146; PG 99, cols. 324, 805; ibid., 120, col. 81, ibid., 127, col. 484; ibid., 151, col. 639; *ActaSS*, Nov. IV, 668, 686; *AB* 70 (1952), 58, 97; A. M. Talbot, *Faith Healing in Late Byzantium* (Brookline, Mass., 1983), 110; F. Dvornik, *La Vie de Saint Grégoire le Décapolite et les Slaves macédoniens au IXe s.* (Paris, 1926), 56; Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Monumenta graeca et latina*, 20; Chr. Papaoikonomou, Ὁ πολιοῦχος τοῦ Ἄργους ἅγιος Πέτρος (Athens, 1908), 103.

If the average person did not sleep on the floor, but also used a real bed only exceptionally, then where did he sleep? One thinks of mattresses that were placed on the floor at night and put aside during the day. There is more: tenth- and eleventh-century texts speak of high mattresses made of wood or built with stones (in one case, of "dry stones," ἐκ ξηϱολίθων,[39] i.e., without any mortar); such expressions and the knowledge of how oriental living quarters looked in recent times—and still do in Athonite monasteries—may provide another solution. Old-style rooms—beginning with prehistoric palaces, for that matter—normally had a permanent, non-movable, long couch built of stone or made of wood, which ran along their walls, often three walls. By day it could be used for seating and for entertaining many people, while at night it could—and was—used for sleeping. Since it was part of the building, this permanent couch would not be counted as furniture, and consequently was not mentioned in our lists. Only rarely would one find in an average middle or late Byzantine house something resembling what we would call a bed.

Bathing equipment and garments are also mentioned regularly in the lists. Ewers, basins, and buckets, χεϱνιβόξεστα,[40] σιτλοεπιχύταϱα, ἐπιχυτήϱια, σίτλαι, λεκάναι, and σαπουνάϱια of all kinds and shapes, water vases called sometimes by the Turkish name μαστϱαπᾶς, all that was necessary to take water from a basin and pour it over oneself, were usual items of household equipment, though in small numbers. Special basins are mentioned for washing one's feet (ποδοπλύτης).[41] These objects, as well as the various towels of linen or cotton that accompanied them, were not particularly expensive (2–6 hyperpyra each). But their number was limited, even in aristocratic households (one or two of each item), which indicates that they were at the disposal of the whole family for common use. They represented a small part of the total value of household goods.

In contrast, the number of *garments* varied according to the social level of each household. Some were extremely expensive or even priceless because they were imperial gifts. These do not present much interest for us.

In most middle-class households one would find from one to three formal outfits, worth 2–6 hyperpyra each. Thus one can say that they appeared as reasonably expensive items, comparable in price to some of the bath equipment.

Particularly expensive (and always mentioned separately) were *belts*, some of which were decorated with gold and precious stones.[42] Belts were signs of rank and authority, and their number varied from household to household. Theodore Sarantenos of Beroia possessed at least six belts, while others had only one—and not very valuable ones at that.

Similar remarks can be made about *icons* and *jewels*, the number and value of which varied with the individual's social and financial status. We find one household with up to seven icons, each of which was worth 2–7 hyperpyra, and another with seventeen icons, one of which was brought to Beroia from Constantinople. Icons seem to have been far less expensive than a good silk blanket. Some of the jewels were cheap, everyday items (the Deblitzenoi possessed seven rings of less than 1.5 hyperpyra each), while others were quite valuable (earrings worth 36 and 48 hyperpyra, and another pair which, together with its matching brooch, was valued at 154 hyperpyra). Most people felt the need to have some or at least one piece of jewelry. It is mentioned in all types of households[43] and obviously constituted an investment (and a reserve in cash), since it could be pawned.[44]

Books, on the contrary, are mentioned less often in these lists and again appear to be an item most often found in monasteries or in the households of members of high society. It is hard to say whether the mere possession of books can be considered as a sure sign of literacy. But we know that these books were quite expensive and consequently only wealthy people were in a position to buy them, even if they were not able to read them by themselves. In wealthy families there was a greater chance of finding at least one literate member or, at worst, of finding a slave or a secretary who would be available for reading to his masters. In the wealthiest household for which there is extant information, that of the Pakourianoi (above, note 11), there were only four books, obviously luxury manuscripts. But a gentleman farmer, like Skaranos of Hermeleia, had at least twenty-one volumes of church literature, some of which were bound. In several other lay households there were no books at all.

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[39] *ActaSS*, Nov. III, 557. Cf. L. Carras, "The Life of Saint Athanasia of Aegina," *Maistor: Classical, Byzantine and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning*, ed. A. Moffatt (Canberra, 1984), 214.

[40] A paten inscribed χεϱνιβόξεστον is preserved in the Hermitage: A. Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of Soviet Museums* (New York-Leningrad, 1977), nos. 64–65.

[41] Cf. also Delehaye, *Les saints stylites*, 212; Sargologos, *Saint Cyrille le Philéote*, 79.

[42] In the will of Theodore Karavas we find one belt (ἀϱγυϱοεπίχϱυσος) worth 8 hyperpyra. Belts are also often mentioned in lives of saints and other texts. See Heikel, "Ignatii diaconi," 401; *ActaSS*, March III, 26, 28 (a belt worth 2 nomismata); Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Žitija dvuh," 132, 133; "Life of Basil the Younger," ed. A. Veselovskij, in *Sbornik otdelenija russkago jazyka . . . imp. akad. nauk* 46 (1889–90), 9; MM, II, 419 (ζωνάϱιον φϱαγγικόν worth 50 hyperpyra), 446, 486, 487.

[43] MM, I, 54–55, 105, 281; II, 300, 419,446, 474–75, 558, 559 (earrings worth 150 hyperpyra), 563 (*trachilea* worth 90 hyperpyra).

[44] E.g., MM, I, 106–7; II, 511–12, 587.

Tools and weapons do not appear with any'regularity. Few of the households that we have examined had agricultural activities, despite the fact that they were situated in the provinces and certainly drew most of their subsistence from agriculture. Tools such as axes, pick-axes, and spades are mentioned in monasteries (which is natural) and in a few lay households. We must assume that this peculiarity is related to the exploitation system that prevailed in late Byzantium: usually the landowner (or the pronoiarios) leased his land to paroikoi, who owned all the equipment necessary for cultivating it. In most cases the landowner did not personally participate in the production process, except for some gentlemen farmers (like Skaranos of Hermeleia) and the monks who had to work the land themselves.

Weapons are strikingly rare for a medieval society. They appear only in the houses of the military and in isolated monasteries (such as that of Xylourgou). Some professional army officers have an almost complete set of armor, and indeed boast that they brought such items from Constantinople (coat of mail, cuirasse, helmet, sword); another private individual, an orphan in Constantinople in 1400, had a sword (a costly one, worth 20 hyperpyra), which he had received as an inheritance. It was kept under trusteeship, obviously because of its value, and not necessarily because the youth might use it one day. It is clear that in this society the protection of the household as well as that of the state was left to professionals and that the average Byzantine rather disliked the idea of spending money on arms. In the medieval world, in which almost everyone, in the Islamic East as well as in the Christian West, bore weapons, the Byzantines were the exception. It is not difficult to understand why others called them effeminate. At any rate, in the households that I have examined, there were definitely more books than weapons.[45]

Kitchenware, kettles and frying pans, are rarely mentioned in the lives of saints. The lists of household contents are much more informative on this point. Cauldrons (λέβητες, κακάβια, καρδάρια, μι[λι]άρια, κουκούμια), kettles (χύτραι), saucepans (σαλτζερά) or frying pans (τηγάνια), and grills (ἐσχάρα, σκάρα) appear in all lists, as many as ten in affluent houses, but only one among the poor.[46] Their value is small or moderate (1–2 hyperpyra), despite the fact that they are mostly made of metal, mainly copper (χάλκωμα). In some cases they are accompanied by pot hangers (κρεμαστάλυσον) or by tripods (πυρωστίαι, πυρομάχοι) that allowed them to be placed over a fire.

Large *jars* (πίθοι) or *barrels* (βαγένια) for storing oil, wine, or wheat are found only in the households of laymen or monks living in the countryside, who had to store the year's harvest in their houses.[47] In city households, which probably bought their produce in small quantities from local shops, large storage facilities were not necessary.

Serving equipment appears in most of the lists: bottles or pitchers for liquids, some of which were reputed to lower the temperature of their contents and for this reason are called κρυωντήρια/κρυεντήρια (1–2 hyperpyra each), κεραστικά, σταγονικά. They are the most common (2–10 per household). Some of these are metal (χαλκοστάμνια) and should not necessarily be identified with the clay jugs which are known for cooling the liquid that they contain. Wine or water carafes (οἰνοχεῖα, ὑελοξέστια, κουρούπια) made of silver, copper, or glass also appear in limited numbers (1–3 per household).[48] Big serving plates (σκουτέλλια, γαβαθίτζια) with decoration, sometimes made of silver, usually of copper, also appear in very small numbers and by no means in all households.[49]

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[45] An expensive part of weaponry was of course the (not necessarily military) riding equipment, the καβαλλαρικά, which could be worth 40 hyperpyra (MM, II, 587–88).

[46] They also sometimes appear in lives of saints: A Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Συλλογὴ παλαιστινιακῆς καὶ συριακῆς ἁγιολογίας, I, 207; *ActaSS*, Nov. III, 528; *AB* 54 (1936), 54, 63; PG 100, col. 117; ibid., 111, col. 689; ibid., 120, col. 61; Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Zitija dvuh," 35.

[47] Cf. Hausherr, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien*, 74; Laurent, *Saint Pierre d'Atroa*, 175; *ActaSS*, Nov. II/1, 367; ibid., III, 533, 545; ibid., IV, 667; ibid., June VII, 171; PG 151, col. 583; Papaoikonomou, Ὁ πολιοῦχος τοῦ Ἄργους ἅγιος Πέτρος, 66; *AB* 14 (1895), 149, 157.

[48] Cf. *ActaSS*, Nov. III, 537, 545, 552, 573; ibid., IV, 643 (καψάκης, ἀμφορίδιον); Heikel, "Ignatii diaconi," 403; Arsenij, *Žitie i podvigi sv. Theodory Solunskoj* (Jurjev, 1899), 25; Βυζαντίς 1 (1909), 247 (ληκυθίδιον); PG 111, col. 637; MM, II, 474, 475.

Also relatively rare are deep, flat individual *plates* of earthenware or wood, which appear mainly in monasteries.[50] Cups are seldom mentioned—three in one household, two in another—while drinking *glasses* appear only in monasteries,[51] together with the above-mentioned plates. The only *cutlery* found in these lists are spoons (κοχλιάρια), two in one layman's house, twenty in another's, and twenty-four in a monastery.

What is not found in the above lists speaks as eloquently of the way of life of the average Byzantine as what does. No knives or forks appear, although they are known to have existed. Spoons are rare and occur mainly in milieus in which individual eating plates were also deemed necessary. Although one cannot exclude the probability that cheaper clay or wooden utensils were used, it seems obvious that eating procedures were rather simplified in the average lay household, and that people often, if not always, ate with their fingers from a large serving plate and drank from a common cup or jar. In the lives of saints there is often mention of drinking glasses and even more often of (undoubtedly cheap) clay cups (κεράμιον, βίκος) that people used for drinking.[52] On the other hand, in monasteries (and hospitals[53]) where rationing of food (and wine) was paramount in order to be fair (and to maintain discipline), and where a long-term investment in basic cleanliness and healthy habits was more important, individual plates, spoons, and glasses were considered necessary, at least for the monastic rank and file. Consequently, the absence of such utensils in provincial middle-class homes could well be the result of a deliberate choice in an effort to simplify the process and perhaps economize. I must emphasize that I am not speaking here about imperial banquets or those of high society, which are far beyond the scope of this paper and had their own rules, probably similar to those of monastic refectories. I must also add that the description proposed here concerns middle- and lower-class households, mainly in the provinces. In Constantinople the use of plates, spoons, and glasses is far better attested, for example, by Theodore Prodromos.[54]

Tables and furniture for seating are also notably rare in these lists of household goods. Tables appear in five documents, and seats are found only in the will of the monk Sabas, who lived on Patmos in the early twelfth century, and in the will of Skaranos, who lived in Hermeleia of Chalkidiki in the late thirteenth. Some tables had removable tops that were placed on trestles; when not in use they could be folded and set aside. Some were solid pieces of furniture, with four legs (τετραπόδια), and one had some decoration (τορνευτόν). Seats are much rarer: on Patmos we find twelve stools (σκαμνία) and two chairs or armchairs (θρονία, the word being a diminutive of throne), obviously reserved for the elite among the table companions. In Hermeleia, in a layman's household, we find five stools and two long benches (μακρυσκάμνια), and we can deduce that this country gentleman, the same one who owned a library of twenty-one books, could hold dinner parties and seat at least a dozen guests, probably more. The other tables are not accompanied by chairs.

Such tables are also mentioned in several lives of saints, sometimes together with stools or chairs/armchairs.[55] Theodore Prodromos describes how a table had to be set up before a meal (obviously because it had been previously folded and put away) but does not describe the seats used for the guests.[56]

We also have evidence of some refectories with permanent tables. The best-known example comes from the monastery of Lavra, where egg-shaped tables, their marble tops supported by oblong slats, are surrounded by oval benches that are stationary as well. This refectory contained tables and benches that could seat more than a hundred monks, but there is not a single piece of furniture that would have to be mentioned in a list such as those that we have been studying. Other variants, of the eleventh century, are preserved in Nea Moni on Chios and in Hosios Loukas; another, from the twelfth century, is found in the monastery of Patmos. It is conceivable that the very wealthy could have afforded special dining rooms with permanent tables in their mansions.[57]

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[49] Cf. *AB* 54 (1936), 63; Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Žitija dvuh," 19; PG 111, col. 713; A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας (St. Petersburg, 1898), V, 315.

[50] And in the hospitals of Pantokrator and Kosmosoteira for the use of the sick; see above, note 11. See also MM, I, 153; II, 300, 490.

[51] A collection of glasses is also mentioned in the typikon of Gregory Pakourianos, para. 34 (p. 148 of the Kauchtschischvili edition).

[52] Cf. Laurent, *Atroa*, 175; *AB* 54 (1936), 54, 55, and 51 (περσικάριον); Vasilevskij, "Life of St Meletios," 64; Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Žitija dvuh," 18; J. Noret, *Vitae duae antiquae sancti Athanasii Athonitae* (Turnhout, 1982), 198, 205; PG 100, cols. 1145, 1164; ibid., 111, col. 648; ibid., 120, cols. 44, 64; Delehaye, *Les saints stylites*, 212; *Byzantion* 25–27 (1955–57), 53; K. Lake, *The Early Days of Monasticism on Mount Athos* (Oxford, 1909), 25; *ActaSS*, March III, 26, 27, 28; ibid., Nov. II/1, 345; ibid., III, 523, 526, 534, 561; Sargologos, *Saint Cyrille le Philéote*, 85, 114, 244; Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Συλλογή, I, 202; "Life of Basil the Younger," 17, 18, 23, 24, 44, 56; *TM* 10 (1987), 83.

[53] Individual plates for the sick are mentioned in the hospitals of both Pantokrator and Kosmosoteira.

[54] Hesseling-Pernot, 40, 53, 62

[55] PG 99, col. 885; ibid., 111, cols. 468, 472, 700; *JÖB* 37 (1987), 37; Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας, V, 351; idem, "Žitija dvuh," 6, 98; idem, Συλλογή, I, 215; *ActaSS*, Nov. III, 552 (συμβατὴ τρ.); *AB* 54 (1936), 80; Vasilevskij, "Life of St Meletios," 56; Sargologos, *Saint Cyrille le Philéote*, 188.

[56] Hesseling-Pernot, 36.

If we now return to the lists we have been analyzing, we see that out of a total of fourteen documents, five explicitly mention tables, and only two of these five mention, along with the tables, any benches or stools. This cannot be a random omission. The matter becomes clearer when we note that the two documents, of 1119 and 1270–74, which mention furniture for seating are also the only two that mention beds. It is unlikely that we are faced with mere coincidence. The situation could hardly represent a geographical or chronological peculiarity, because these two documents are quite distant chronologically and geographically (Chalkidiki in eastern Macedonia and Patmos, an island of the Dodecanese). One must seek the explanation by examining the various types of houses and life-styles that may have existed simultaneously in the Byzantine Empire. And for that purpose I propose to begin my explanation with a lexicographical note.

The Greek word κλίνη meant a couch in antiquity and has the same meaning in modern Greek. It has consequently been assumed that it meant the same thing throughout the Middle Ages, and the word has been interpreted accordingly. However, some ten years ago, the late José Grosdidier de Matons demonstrated that in the middle Byzantine period (roughly from the tenth to the late twelfth century) and probably later, the word κλίνη was used to indicate the seat next to the table, "un fauteuil de table."[58] If we think of rooms as I have described them above, with a couch along three walls, we can understand how the meaning of the word κλίνη may have changed: in these rooms there was no need for chairs or stools; at mealtime one could sit on the permanent bench (couch *and* chair) and either place one's food at one's side (something that I have observed on Mount Athos) or use a table or other piece of furniture placed between the benches. In the absence of a table, this other piece of furniture could well have been one of the chests that are mentioned in many households. One should not forget that from late antiquity onward, the dining room was mainly called τρικλίνιον or τρικλινάριον,[59] the "three-couch room," terms that fitted particularly well with the room arrangement that I have tried to describe.

In other words, one has to assume that during the middle and late Byzantine periods, two styles of interior arrangement of the average house must have existed in villages as well as in cities, both inspired by ancient types.[60] One type followed the model of the affluent: since rooms in these houses were not lined with permanent benches, a certain amount of furniture was required: this included tables, chairs or stools, and beds or couches. The other, more "medieval" type, is also known from antiquity and is primarily characteristic of the living quarters of the poor. It had a permanent wooden or stone-built couch, a kind of divan, which covered three sides of the room (τρικλίνιον) and which could serve as bed and chair. This second type reflected the more rudimentary and simple way of life that characterized the Middle Ages. Less luxurious, it seems to have prevailed in most middle and late Byzantine households, including some affluent ones.

A change in house arrangements as well as in household furnishings also means a change in life-style. Less sophisticated and demanding, the new life-style was simpler and offered everyone the basic amenities of life at less expense. Since both styles of housing, with or without basic movable pieces of furniture, had existed since antiquity, what changed in medieval times was the frequency with which the one or the other was used, and the social level to which each corresponded. All this fits very well with the general atmosphere of the Middle Ages, when an open economy, big, bustling cities, outwardness, and cosmopolitanism gave way to a closed economy, small, sleepy towns, inwardness, and marked provincialism.

When did this new mode prevail? It is likely that this occurred during the so-called "dark ages," sometime between the mid-seventh and the ninth centuries. Many scholars have championed the idea of a basic change in Byzantium after the reign of Heraclius. And the truth of this statement can be shown, as far as our subject is concerned, by examining once more what is said by Koukoules about beds. If one looks at his references, one realizes that there is a real dichotomy in the documentation. In the sources of the third to seventh centuries that he quotes, beds are mentioned roughly as frequently as bedcovers. But when we turn to sources from the eighth to fifteenth century, there are four times as many references to bedcovers than there are to beds.[61] It is clear that the bed as a separate object had in the meantime become rare, and consequently was not mentioned as often, while the covers, which continued in use in the new-style houses, were mentioned with the usual frequency. The same exercise can be repeated with other household items. If it were done in a systematic way, this kind of arithmetic might provide Koukoules' book with the methodological refinements that would make it much more enlightening and useful.

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[57] In the 8th century, St. Philaretos had an "old" table covered with ivory: *Byzantion* 9 (1934), 137. A long table decorated with precious stones is also described in the "Life of Basil the Younger," ed. A. Veselovskij, 43.

[58] J. Grosdidier de Matons, "Note sur le sens médiéval du mot klinè," *TM* 7 (1979), 363 ff.

[59] Koukoules, *Life*, IV, 294.

[60] For antique house types and arrangements see Veyne, *Private Life* (above, note 2), and H. Blank, *Einführung in das Privatleben der Griechen und Römer* (Darmstadt, 1976).

I am aware that the new documentation that I have used is small in quantity and its proof value is limited; I am also aware that, in spite of preaching methodology, I have been treating my material as if it concerned only one reality, in spite of the fact that the households under consideration are separated by many centuries and great distances. Subtler nuances are impossible, at least in our present state of knowledge. I have tried to demonstrate one way, among others, that might be used in preparing a new study on the "Life and Civilization of the Byzantines." Let us hope that more refined answers will be obtained from archaeology and from painstaking in-depth research into works of art.

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[61] These statistics are based on Koukoules, *Life*, II/2, 67–77. For the period up to the 7th century, I counted 40 references to beds and 44 to bedcovers; for the 8th–15th centuries, I counted 24 references to beds (including the ambiguous term κλίνη) and 97 to bedcovers.

XXIII

THE MEDIEVAL VIA EGNATIA

The Roman Via Egnatia was above all a military road, a road for the imperial mail service, but also a road accessible to merchants and other travellers, of various kinds.[1] In her recent book, Elisabeth Malamut has shown that even the saints travelled a lot during the Middle Ages.[2] Many of them or of their companions followed the Via Egnatia in their peregrinations; or, rather, they followed parts of it, according to the situation prevailing here and there. The choice of a road depended upon several factors other than its state of maintenance, the most important of which was security. After all, a strong army could deter by its own presence any brigands or otherwise rough or greedy locals from hampering its passage or requiring some payment to permit it. But this was not the case for merchants or saints, except for those who resorted to wonder-working.

The importance of the Via Egnatia in ancient times was strategic and economic; it was the continuation in the Balkan peninsula of the Via Appia linking Rome to Brindisi. In other words, with the foundation of Constantinople more than before, a major axis started functioning which united the two capitals of the Empire – a long trip on land with the rather short crossing of the Adriatic. One would have expected the importance of this road to increase during the Middle Ages, when Arab piracy rendered all maritime trips in the Central Mediterranean highly risky. But nothing of the kind happened, in spite of the fact that the Italian peninsula was the economically interesting part of Western Europe that maintained almost constant commercial relations with Constantinople – not to speak of Southern Italy and Sicily, which remained, one way or the other, part of the Empire until the late 11th century.

This was because the Via Egnatia functioned only partially in Byzantine times. After the arrival of the Slavs at the turn of the 7th century, substantial parts of it escaped from Byzantine control. The beginnings were absolutely critical. In the miracles of Saint Demetrius, which describe the situation in the 7th century,

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[1] The basic monograph on the Via Egnatia in the Middle Ages is still the one by TAFEL. Parts of the medieval road have been studied in more recent publications such as those quoted *infra* and by SOUSTAL, esp. p. 136-138.

[2] E. MALAMUT, *Sur la route des saints byzantins*, (Paris 1993).

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relief to besieged Thessalonica came by sea.[3] Imperial campaigns against the Slavs living between Constantinople and Thessalonica are mentioned in 658 and in 678;[4] in 687/88, Justinian II broke through all the way to Thessalonica, but had much trouble returning to Constantinople, presumably at the straits of Kavala.[5] One further campaign is attested in 759;[6] in 782/3, the imperial army proceeded once again to Thessalonica, but it seems that this time its main objective was the Slavs of Southern Greece and of the Peloponnese.[7] From then on, except for the moments of important Bulgarian campaigns, such as those of Khan Krum and of Tsars Symeon and Samuel, the section of the Egnatia between Constantinople and Thessalonica seems to have been open for the Byzantine armies. In the first half of the 9th century, the military provinces, the themes, of Thessalonica and of Strymon seem to have been created, reinforcing the Byzantine presence on a lengthy segment of the eastern half of the Via Egnatia.

Yet this was far from being a secure road. In 796/7 and in ca 830, we have two saints, Theodore Studites and Gregory Decapolites, who avoided it. The first from Abydos sailed to Lemnos; thence he sailed west, because, says he, they were afraid of the "nation living there" (on the mainland; no doubt the Slavs of Eastern Macedonia); he went to the tip of the Kassandra peninsula before reaching Thessalonica.[8] The second, on his way to Rome, took the boat from Prokonnesos (Marmara Adası) to Christoupolis (Kavala), probably because the trip by land was not safe. Then he continued on his way to Thessalonica, and had problems with the Slavs of the Strymon, who robbed travellers.[9] Then he turned south all the way to Corinth, where he took the boat for Italy. On his way back, he went first to

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[3] P. LEMERLE, *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de Saint Démétrius*, v. I-II, (Paris 1979, 1981).

[4] *Ibid.*, v. II, p. 128-137.

[5] THEOPHANES, ed. DE BOOR, p. 364. I cannot accept the uselessly long itinerary proposed for this campaign by M. GREGORIOU-IOANNIDOU, Ἡ ἐκστρατεία τοῦ Ἰουστινιανοῦ Β΄ κατὰ τῶν Βουλγάρων καὶ Σλάβων, *Byzantiaka*, 2 (1982) 111-124. I am also very sceptical as to whether non-military communications between Constantinople and Thessalonica were always open during the Dark Ages, as suggested by I. KARAYANNOPULOS, *Les Slaves en Macédoine. La prétendue interruption des communications entre Constantinople et Thessalonique du 7e au 9e s.*, Comité National Grec des Études du Sud-est Européen. Centre d'Études du Sud-est Européen, 25 (1989) 38 pp. A shorter version of this paper has been published in Greek in the *Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Φιλοσοφικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης*, 22 (1984) 211-229.

[6] THEOPHANES, ed. DE BOOR, p. 430.

[7] THEOPHANES, p. 456 ff.

[8] THEODORI STUDITAE, *Epistulae*, ed. G. FATOUROS, v. I, (Berlin-New York 1992) p. 15 (letter no 3). See also J. Cl. CHEYNET et B. FLUSIN, Du monastère de Kathara à Thessalonique: Théodore Stoudite sur la route d'exil, *REB*, 48 (1990) 193-211.

[9] This in my view does not mean that these Slavs enjoyed a special status of autonomy, as surmised by P. GEORGIEV, Neizpolzuvano svedenie za statuta na Sklaviniite vŭv Vizantija v načaloto na IX v., *Studia protobulgarica et medievalia europensia. V čest na Prof. V. Beševliev*, (Veliko Tŭrnovo 1993) p. 59-62.

Thessalonica, presumably by the same itinerary, and then he took the boat to Constantinople.[10] One remains with the impression that the segment of the Egnatia between Thessalonica and Constantinople was usable but dangerous for private travellers in the early 9th century; it would become more secure later.[11]

More importantly, in all this story, there was no question of going any further west than Thessalonica, no doubt because the highway, presumably after Edessa/Vodena, entered territories that were beyond imperial control. The Byzantines by then held quite securely the western outlet of the road, Dyrrachion, which was the capital of a well-established province (theme) in the first half of the 9th century. But the hinterland, between the Adriatic and the Aegean was largely in non-Byzantine hands. Consequently, those who wanted to reach the Adriatic and thence Italy, had to follow a much longer itinerary: from Thessalonica to Thessaly through the Tempe pass, then crossing to Mainland Greece through the Bralos pass and following the eastern road to Corinth[12] or the western one to Amphissa/Naupaktos, and either taking the boat to Italy, or going further up on the western coastline to Bouthrotos or Corfu or more to the north before crossing to the west. This was friendly and reasonably secure territory, and it reduced the maritime section of the trip and the risks that it entailed because of the Arab pirates; but it was a very long distance. This itinerary is attested already in 661/2,[13] and throughout the 9th and 10th centuries, as is shown in several passages of the Life of Joseph the Hymnographer,[14] the Life of St Phantinos,[15] the Miracles of St Demetrius,[16] the Life of St Luke of Steirion, the Life of St Elias the Younger;[17] and in the description of the embassy of Liutprand of Cremona, who went by land from Constantinople to Naupaktos in 968 (*asinando, ambulando, equitando*) and took the boat at Naupaktos for Patras, Leukas, Corfu, Italy.[18]

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[10] F. DVORNIK, *La Vie de Saint Grégoire le Décapolite et les Slaves macédoniens au IXe s.*, (Paris 1926).

[11] E. g., *Acta Sanctorum*, October IV, p. 191; *Actes d'Iviron* I, eds. J. LEFORT, N. OIKONOMIDES, D. PAPACHRYSSANTHOU, (Paris 1985) p. 52.

[12] And from there elsewhere in the Peloponnese. The constant contacts between Italy and the Peloponnese during the mid-Byzantine period have been outlined by D. GKAGKTZES, M. LEONTSINI, A. PANOPOULOU, Πελοπόννησος και νότια Ιταλία: σταθμοί επικοινωνίας στη Μέση Βυζαντινή Περίοδο, in: *Ἡ ἐπικοινωνία στὸ Βυζάντιο*, ed. N. MOSCHONAS, (Athens 1993) (Acts of the 2nd International Symposium of the Center for Byzantine Research) p. 469-486.

[13] See A. STRATOS, *Τὸ Βυζάντιο στὸν Ζ´ αἰῶνα*, (Athens 1972) p. 210-211.

[14] A. PAPADOPOULOS-KERAMEUS, *Monumenta graeca et latina ad historiam Photii patriarchae pertinentia*, v. II, (Petersburg 1901) p. 3, and M. TREU, *Theodori Pediasimi eiusque amicorum quae extant*, (Potsdam 1899) p. 3.

[15] *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, ed. H. DELEHAYE, (Brussels 1902) p. 224.

[16] *Acta Sanctorum*, October IV, p. 192-193.

[17] I have put together the relevant text of the Lives of Sts Luke and Elias in: The First Century of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas, *DOP*, 46 (1992) 254.

[18] MIGNE, *Patrologia Latina*, 136, 933 ff. (paragr. 58).

There is uncertainty concerning the itinerary followed by the pontifical embassy of 869-870. On their way to Constantinople, the ambassadors landed at an unspecified place in Byzantium, followed some tortuous roads, and reached Thessalonica, where they were met by the imperial emissaries, who accompanied them by land to Selymbria and Constantinople. On their way back, they were accompanied by imperial officials as far as Dyrrachion (but we do not know how they got there, by land or by sea and following which itinerary), and from there they sailed to Italy.[19] The eastern half of the Egnatia seems to have functioned properly, while we are left without precise information concerning the western half.

One would have expected that the western half of the road must have opened all the way after Basil II's victory over Bulgaria and the conquest of the totality of the Balkan Peninsula by the Byzantines in 1018. And it eventually was. But things were not simple from the beginning. A monk, Saint Meletios of Myoupolis, who wanted to go from Constantinople to Rome in the fifties of the 11th century, went first by land to Thessalonica, then to the region of Thèbes and then he sailed to Rome:[20] obviously this was still the 10th-century itinerary, the long one. It is easy to imagine that this was because of the lack of security that persisted in the western parts of the Empire, in spite of the quelling of Peter Deljan's revolt in 1041. Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela also followed the same itinerary in the opposite direction, but this could well have been due to his desire to visit the Jewish communities of the Peloponnese and of Hellas.[21]

The problem of the western half of the Egnatia is a complicated one. In the 11th and 12th centuries the very few and imprecise sources that we have show that traffic originating from Durrachion and Avlona tended to avoid the classic itinerary of the valley of the Shkumbi, and moved eastwards by the valley of the Devoli as far as the town of Deabolis. Then it bifurcated: one track reached the city of Ochrid, passing north of the same name lake; the second continued eastwards and reached Kastoria.[22] Both these itineraries (the first of which is also mentioned by Idrisi[23]) converged afterwards on Edessa/Vodena and took the classic Egnatia to reach Pella and Thessalonica. In the 12th century these itineraries were also used by merchants, and particularly by people who wanted to transport money or mail: security had by then become very satisfactory. Also, it seems that it was used by Italian ambassadors (1199) and imperial emissaries going to Italy (1201) as they all left Constantinople by land and were given the right to use the horses of the State.[24]

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[19] Le *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. L. DUCHESNE, v. II, (Paris 1955) p. 180, 184; see also p. 189 for the text of Anastasius Bibliothecarius.

[20] C. PAPADOPOULOS, *Συμβολαὶ εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν τοῦ μοναχικοῦ βίου ἐν Ἑλλάδι. Β΄ Ὁ ὅσιος Μελέτιος ὁ Νέος*, (Athens 1935) p. 36-38.

[21] *The Itinerary of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela*, transl. by A. ASHER, (London and Berlin 1840) p. 45-49: Corfu, Anatolikon, Lepanto, Thebes, Zitounion, Thessalonica and on to Constantinople.

[22] The existing texts have been put together by A. DUCELLIER, *La façade maritime de l'Albanie au Moyen Age*, (Thessalonica 1981) p. 75 ff. To the military itineraries that he mentions one could add the ones of the First Crusade. See S. RUNCIMAN, *A History of the Crusades*, v. I, (Cambridge 1953) p. 55-156, 161.

[23] B. NEDKOV, *Bŭlgarija i sŭsednite i zemi prez XII vek spored geografijata na Idrisi*, (Sofia 1960) p. 39-41.

Having been practically abandoned for some centuries, the classical road obviously had fallen in disrepair. Security considerations may also have helped in the development of the new medieval 'tracks' that replaced the classical Egnatia. It would seem that some kind of maintenance of the Roman road picked up somewhere between Ochrid and Edessa/Vodena, in the territories where Byzantine authority was restored already by the 8th century, and for this reason the itineraries from Edessa/Vodena[25] all the way to Thessalonica and to Constantinople remained unchanged and practically unchallenged.[26] There is no direct evidence to this effect but one can imagine that this maintenance was the result of exacting from the local populations the well-known Roman and Byzantine corvée called *viarum constructionis sollicitudo* or ὁδοστρωσία, road-building, which was intended to maintain the road network of the Empire.

This situation in the 12th century, with a well-defined and well-maintained road in the eastern half, and some parallel but well-policed tracks in the western, was the high-point of the Via Egnatia in Byzantine times, when it was in its entirety subject to one political authority. With 1204 and the Fourth Crusade, this roadway fell in a shambles. The Balkan peninsula would become a mosaic of different political entities, some large and some very small, more or less organised, more or less interested in supporting or even allowing international transport through their own territories, bitterly opposed to each other.

By the middle of the 13th century, Byzantium had re-established its authority over the eastern half of the Egnatia, which became once again the major axis between Constantinople and Thessalonica. It was used by several armies.[27] But the western half of the road, inside the State of Epiros, definitely declined, as it was now loosely controlled by the Epirote authorities and was subject to the feuds of the Albanian warlords. Large-scale trade, controlled by Venice, Genoa, and, to a lesser degree, by Dubrovnik, was resolutely turning to the economically more profitable maritime transport. But even the courier services ignored the western part of the Egnatia. From Dubrovnik they reached Thessalonica via Serbia and the Vardar valley.[28] From his vantage point in Albania, A. Ducellier rightly speaks of "la sclérose définitive de la voie transbalkanique."

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[24] F. MIKLOSICH and J. MÜLLER, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi*, v. III, (Vienna 1865) p. 48, 48-49.

[25] It should be noted that the town of Edessa is mentioned under that name as the seat of a Byzantine strategos in the Taktikon of Escorial, dated between 971 and 975. Later the city would be bitterly fought over between Byzantines and Bulgarians. See N. OIKONOMIDES, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe s.*, (Paris 1972) p. 360-361.

[26] Only Idrisi mentions an itinerary that omits Thessalonica: Ohrid, Skoplje, Strumica, Serres, Zichna, and Chrysoupolis at the mouth of the Strymon: NEDKOV, *Idrisi*, p. 37-39.

[27] Cf., for example, ASDRACHA, *Rhodopes*, p. 25-30.

In the first decades of the 14th century the Via Egnatia between Constantinople and Thessalonica functioned regularly, in spite of the Catalan adventure that cut it for three years (and which obliged the Emperor to fortify the passes of Kavala with a wall) and in spite of the first Byzantine civil war (1321-1328), which was interrupted by long periods of peace. One may presume that the road was also adequately policed: in the neighbourhood of the Strymon, Gregoras met some frightful but good-humoured road guards in 1327.[29] One may also presume that those guards or other local lords were collecting some duties from passers-by: although Gregoras does not speak of any such duties that he had to pay, one may presume that this was because he travelled as an ambassador not as a merchant, while the duties were exacted from those who travelled for an economic purpose.[30] The names of such duties are well attested in 14th century documents: διαβατικόν, διαβατίκιον, *pedaggio*, was a tax for passing through a, presumably controlled, point; πορϱιατικόν was the tax for crossing a river.[31] But the actual procedure of such payments is not described for us in any source that I know.

The situation deteriorated drastically with the second Byzantine civil war (1341-1347). The intervention of the Serbs and the conquest of most of Macedonia by Stephen Dushan, who laid claim even to the imperial throne, separated decisively Constantinople from Thessalonica; the all destructive raids of the Turks, especially those of Umur Aydinoğlu, wrought havoc all over the place; and the final installation of the Ottomans in Kallipolis in 1354 drastically decreased the road's usability for economic purposes: the Via Egnatia thus became a sequence of road sections, held by different masters, whose main purpose was to collect some duties, and, most importantly, to deny their adversaries the control of the road. These were policies motivated by petty antagonisms, petty strategic or fiscal considerations but which had a pronounced anti-economic character. There could not be any question of maintenance on a road that tended to become a battlefield.

The break-up of authority over the eastern Egnatia can best be seen in the cases of two semi-independent princes who reigned over sections of it in the middle of the century. The first was a Bulgarian adventurer, Momchil, who entered the service of Andronikos III, then participated in the civil war, first on the side of Kantakouzenos, then on the side of his opponents, and obtained the high dignity of despotes together with the government of a large region of the Rhodopes, including Xanthi, that became the centre of his administration situated on the Egnatia. Soon he acted as an independent lord, no doubt drawing every financial advantage that the position of his principality guaranteed. But he did not profit long from this situation, because he was defeated and killed by the Turks of Umur Aydinoğlu in 1345.[32]

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[28] B. KREKIĆ, *Dubrovnik (Raguse) et le Levant au Moyen Age*, (Paris - La Haye 1961) p. 68-70.

[29] R. GUILLAND, *La Correspondance de Nicéphore Grégoras*, (Paris 1927) p. 39. This text is badly interpreted by M. BARTUSIS, *The Late Byzantine Army, Arms and Society, 1204-1453*, (Philadelphia 1992) p. 320.

[30] [CLAVIJO], *Embajada a Tamorlan*, ed. F. LOPEZ ESTRADA, (Madrid 1943) p. 80-81, describes how Tzanichites, a noble of the Trapezuntian emperor, tried to extract a duty from the ambassadors who crossed his territory and how those reacted by saying that they were "ambassadors, not merchants." The scene concerns a different region (the Pontos) at a different date (early 15th century), but one can hypothesise that the general situation must have been more or less the same in the Balkans of the 14th century.

[31] See H. ANTONIADIS-BIBICOU, *Recherches sur les douanes à Byzance*, (Paris 1963) p. 123, 134.

A second case in point arises shortly afterwards, when eastern Macedonia with Serres was occupied by the Serbs, who arrived at the gates of Christoupolis (Kavala).[33] It is the story of a group of Bithynian adventurers: in 1350 they had occupied Anaktoropolis (i.e., Limen Eleutheroupoleos, at 15km to the south-west of Kavala) and successfully defended it against Kantakouzenos; in 1357 they were granted by John V Palaiologos this city as well as Chrysoupolis (at the mouth of the Strymon, the city that replaced ancient Amphipolis, that they had taken from the Serbs) and the island of Thasos, with the right to bequeath them to their children; before 1365, they had also obtained the governorship of Christoupolis. They were led by two brothers with imperial titles, the grand stratopedarches Alexios and the grand primikerios John, who would eventually become the founders of the Athonite monastery of the Pantokrator. The elder brother died in 1368/9, the younger retired to the Pantokrator before 1384, no doubt as a consequence of losing his possessions to the Ottomans (who occupied Serres in 1383).[34]

The principality that I have described was divided into several parts, connected with each other only by sea. But it so happens that it was definitely oriented towards controlling parts of the Via Egnatia. Chrysoupolis, the main fortress at the mouth of the Strymon and its region, is situated in the neighbourhood of the Marmari ford[35] used by all travellers of the Egnatia who wanted to cross the river, on horseback, or, in case of high waters, with a small boat.[36] At the two ends of this crossing, the lords of the region built two imposing towers in domains that belonged to the Monasteries of the Pantokrator and of Zographou – two strongholds that protected the peasants but could also serve as checkpoints for the collection of the *poriatikon*, the well-attested duty for crossing the river. Later, when the two brothers were entrusted with the government of Christoupolis, they settled in the immediate vicinity of the nearby fortified straights, another place where the *diabatikon* (duty for passing through) could be collected. It is obvious that the scattered principality of the two brothers was economically and strategically linked to the Egnatia.

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[32] Cf. C. ASDRACHA, Les Rhodopes au XIVe siècle: histoire administrative et prosopographie, *REB*, 34 (1976) 201-202.

[33] It seems to me that the city-port of Christoupolis remained Byzantine, in spite of the hypothesis to the contrary proposed by G. OSTROGORSKI, Christoupolis entre Serbes et Byzantins, *Zbornik Filozofskog Fakulteta*, 8 (1964) 333-342.

[34] For the time being, see V. KRAVARI, *Actes du Pantocrator*, (Paris 1991) p. 7-15, and, for their origins, add Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris *Historiarum Libri IV*, ed. L. SCHOPEN, v. III, (Bonn 1832) p. 114-115. The origins and the biographies of these two brothers will be studied separately, in my 'Patronage in Palaiologan Mount Athos', a paper read at the 1994 Birmingham Byzantine Symposium (in press).

[35] The ford of Marmari near Chrysoupolis is mentioned in the 12th century (NEDKOV, *Idrisi*, p. 53). On the crossing of the Strymon and the function of the two towers see I. PAPAGGELOS, *Ὁ πόρος τοῦ Μαρμαρίου. Πόλις καὶ χώρα στὴν Ἀρχαία Μακεδονία καὶ Θράκη. Μνήμη Δ. Λαζαρίδη*, (Thessalonica 1990) p. 333-351, and N. ZEKOS, Βυζαντινοὶ πύργοι στὸ κάτω τμῆμα τῆς κοιλάδας τοῦ Στρυμόνα, paper presented at a Congress on the History of Serres, 1993.

This is a case that we know relatively well because these adventurers were closely linked with Mount Athos and are mentioned in several archival documents. There is no doubt that other similar potentates must have existed along the Via Egnatia in the 14th century, especially after the collapse of Byzantine power. Don't we know that the straits of Philippi were controlled by the Serb Caesar Vojichna, who captured the Byzantine Emperor Matthaios Kantakouzenos there in 1356?[37] The eastern half of the road was becoming less and less practicable for economic and cumbersome for military traffic. It was manifesting the same sad phenomena that had broken up and destroyed its western half one and a half centuries earlier. The trans-Balkan highway did not exist any more.

To function again, it needed a unifying power that would control it from one end to the other, that would have a keen interest in its strategic and economic potential, and would guarantee maintenance and security. This was to come with the Ottoman conquest, significantly marked by the construction of new fortresses, such as Yenice-i-Karasu (Genisea) to the south of Xanthi, Yenice-i-Vardar (Giannitsa) between Thessalonica and Edessa, and, much later, Elbasan, on the river Shkumbi. Thus, after many centuries, the western Egnatia recovered its initial, ancient route, leading to the Adriatic Sea and its maritime trade.[38]

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[36] GUILLAND, *Correspondance de Nicéphore Grégoras*, p. 35.

[37] D. NICOL, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos (Cantacuzenus) ca. 1100-1460*, (Washington 1968) p. 116.

[38] Cf. A. DUCELLIER, Le bassin adriatique, exutoire du commerce balkanique à la fin du XVe siècle: la voie de mer, in: *Hommes et richesses dans l'empire byzantin II. VIIIe-XVe siècle*, ed. V. KRAVARI, J. LEFORT, C. MORRISSON, (Paris 1991) p. 277-288.

XXIV

ST ANDREW, JOSEPH THE HYMNOGRAPHER, AND THE SLAVS OF PATRAS

In chapter 49 of his *De administrando imperio*, Constantine Porphyrogennetos explains to the reader why some Peloponnesian Slavs have been subjected to the metropolis of Patras.[1] This is the first of the chapters concerning the internal affairs of the empire, as announced at chapter 48, l. 22–27. Instead of a regular title starting with the preposition *περί*, this chapter is qualified, most unusually, as a "writ" (*γραφή*), presumably because of its special "literary" characteristics, no doubt its hagiographic nature. According to some scholars, this information derives from a document that Emperor Nikephoros I gave to the metropolis of Patras;[2] according to others, it hearkens back to a hagiographical legend, which came down to Constantine orally, and may have been invented or elaborated considerably later than the events mentioned therein, possibly at the time of Leo VI.[3]

The story goes as follows: under Emperor Nikephoros I, the Slavs revolted, attacked the houses of their Greek neighbours and, with the support of some Arabs from Africa, went on to attack and plunder Achaia (by which I understand the village of Kato Achagià, to the west of Patras, and not the long forgotten Roman province of Achaia[4]). They

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[1] I quote the text of the 2nd edition by Gy. Moravcsik & R. J. H. Jenkins, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De administrando imperio* (Washington, D.C., 1967); see also vol. II, *Commentary* (London, 1962). The bibliography concerning this chapter is vast and will not be repeated here, except for the individual publications quoted in the footnotes. For a general survey of the problems and of the scholarly literature, see the commentary to this chapter by G. Litavrin, in *Konstantin Bagrjanarodnyj, Ob Upravlenii imperiej* (Moscow, 1989), 427 ff.

[2] O. Kresten, "Zur Echtheit des *σιγίλλιον* des Kaisers Nikephoros I. für Patras", *Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 19 (1977), 15–78.

[3] P. Lemerle, "La Chronique improprement dite de Monemvasie: le contexte historique et légendaire", *REB* 21 (1963), 5–49, esp. 37 ff.

[4] See *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art*, ed. J. Nesbitt & N. Oikonomides, 2 (Washington, D.C., 1994), 2.23 and 2.23.1.

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then laid siege to the city of Patras, whose inhabitants, oppressed by hunger, considered surrendering; but first they sent an emissary to see if the Byzantine army was coming from Corinth. No relief force was in sight, but the emissary, thanks to the intervention of St Andrew, accidentally gave the signal to the contrary, which so emboldened them that they made a sally and routed their besiegers with the help of the saint himself, who manifested himself as an invincible horseman chasing the enemy. The Slavs took refuge in St Andrew's church, of all places, which was outside the walls, and were eventually ordered through an imperial *sigillion*, to be subject to the metropolis of Patras, which they still did in the 10th century. These events have been dated *c.* 805.

The legendary character of the story is obvious. But this need not mean that the narrative of events does not contain any truth. That they are first mentioned in a text written 150 years after the fact is the only reason for questioning their veracity. Similar information is found in even later texts, including an official letter of Patriarch Nicholas III Grammatikos and the holy synod from the year 1084.[5] But of course, all these traditions are subject to doubt, because they are transmitted by sources considerably later than the events. On the other hand, in his excellent study of Nikephoros I's *sigillion* for Patras, Kresten has identified phrases which could have come directly from an imperial decree and which refer to the saint's miraculous intervention in terms very similar to those used by Justinian II when referring to St Demetrios of Thessalonica.[6]

There is, however, an earlier source for these events, published recently and not studied, to my knowledge, with respect to the historical information that it contains.[7] This is a liturgical canon for St Andrew, written by a poet named Joseph, as announced in the acrostichis. This must be Joseph the Hymnographer, a Greek-speaking poet from Sicily, one of the best of his time, who lived most of his life in Constantinople and died in 886. His authorship of the canon cannot be questioned as the acrostichis, composed of a twelve-syllable verse followed by the poet's first name, is typical of this poet.

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[5] V. Grumel, *Les regestes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople* I/3 (Chalcedon, 1947), No. 938.

[6] Kresten, "Zur Echtheit des σιγίλλιον", 39 ff.

[7] *Analecta Hymnica Graeca e codicibus eruta Italiae inferioris*, III. *Canones Novembris*, ed. A. Kominis (Rome, 1972), 545-553.

It may have been the second of a series of eight canons (seven of which are lost) that the poet wrote for this saint, as it is said in the acrostichis that this canon is the δεύτερος; it is true that Joseph wrote sets of eight numbered canons for several other saints.[8] Or, less likely, Joseph's canon could be second to a pre-existing one concerning the apostle, which was called πρῶτος in its own acrostichis, and which was written by the monk John, who lived before Joseph.[9] Two more canons by other poets to St Andrew are also known: the first is the work of a poet called Andrew, the second, anonymous, is composed in twelve syllable verse.[10] Another poem to St Andrew was written in the 12th century by a certain Nikephoros.[11] Other, later poems to St Andrew are mentioned by K. Triantaphyllou.[12]

In most hymnographic texts, St Andrew is glorified for his apostolic work, the qualities of his speeches that converted pagans into Christians, his divine rhetoric, and converting the nations in various parts of the world; he is also glorified for his martyrdom on an X-shaped cross.[13] These are the usual exploits attributed to St Andrew in his Lives and in his Synaxarium. But in Joseph the Hymnographer's text, together with all the above, we find additional qualities of the saint, unknown to the other hagiographical and hymnographical texts. It should be remembered that all that follows has to be dated before the death of the poet, which occurred no later than 886 and likely some years before. We shall see that it was written much earlier.

(a) Joseph's text is written on behalf of a clergy and people particularly devoted to the saint and who request his protection against all "dangers": ὁ κλῆρος τε καὶ ποίμνιον καὶ λαός σου μέτριος ἀξιωθέντες, ἅγιε, χρηματίσαι ἀναβοῶμεν σοι· "ἐκ παντοίων κινδύνων ἡμᾶς φύλαττε".[14] And later: λαόν σου καὶ ποίμνιον.[15]

(b) This clergy and people could be living in a place once visited by St Andrew, and for this reason declare that they prostrate themselves on his very footsteps: *καὶ προσκυλινδοῦμαι σου τοῖς θείοις ἴχνεσιν.*[16]

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[8] *Analecta Hymnica*, 636.

[9] This is the canon that appears in the Menaion of November (Athens, 1973), 214 ff. On the poet John the Monk, see N. B. Tomadakes, Βυζαντινὴ Ὑμνογραφία καὶ Ποίησις, II (Athens, 1965), 214.

[10] *Analecta Hymnica*, 530–537, 538–544.

[11] K. Triantaphyllou, "Ὁ ἐκ Πατρῶν ποιητὴς Νικηφόρος (ΙΒ′ αἰ.)", Ἀθηνᾶ 77 (1978/79), 199–209, esp. 204–206.

[12] K. Triantaphyllou, Ἱστορικὸν Λεξικὸν τῶν Πατρῶν, 2nd ed. (Patras, 1980), 20.

[13] Cf. *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, I (Rome, 1961), 1094–1113.

[14] *Analecta Hymnica*, 546.

[15] *Analecta Hymnica*, 550.

(c) This clergy and people have access to the saint's tomb, which produces visible *myron* that perfumes the souls: *μύρον αἰσθητῶς ὁ τάφος σου πηγάζει εὐωδιάζον τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.*[17]

(d) The clergy and people were saved by St Andrew and implore his further protection from life's tribulations and from the revolt of the savage barbarians: *Λιμένα σε σωτηρίας εὑρόντες, ἀπόστολε, εὐχαῖς σου ῥυσθείημεν ζάλης παθῶν τε καὶ θλίψεων καὶ ἐπαναστάσεως τῶν ἀνημέρων βαρβάρων, ἀξιάγαστε.*[18]

(e) St Andrew, using the invincible force of divine salvation (= the cross), has destroyed tens of thousands of enemies; he is now asked (by the clergy and people) to keep them unharmed from enemies and from wickedness, and to protect them whenever necessary: *Ἰσχὺν ἀπροσμάχητον, Ἀνδρέα, ἐπαγόμενος τὸ σωτήριον ὅπλον τοῦ παντοκράτορος ὤλεσας ἐχθρῶν μυριάδας, ὧν καὶ ἡμᾶς τῆς κακίας ῥῦσαι ἀτρώτους, ἀπήμονας συντηρῶν ἡμᾶς πάντοτε.*[19]

(f) St Andrew is asked to intervene with Christ in order to subdue the large army of the Arabs: *στρατὸν πολυάριθμον Ἀγαρηνῶν κατάβαλε, τὸν Χριστὸν ἱκετεύων, Ἀνδρέα πάνσοφε.*[20]

It is obvious that this canon was written for the clergy and the inhabitants of the city of Patras, St Andrew's city *par excellence*, where he had preached and, according to tradition, suffered martyrdom and been buried. His relics were removed to Constantinople and placed in the church of the Holy Apostles in 357. But his tomb remained in Patras, near the basilica of the saint, where it was then, and is still shown today.[21] All this coincides completely with the narrative in texts (a)-(c) above. Thus, we must consider that our text was written for the inhabitants of that city — or, rather, to fulfill a commission of the metropolis of Patras.

Text (e) refers to a military victory that St Andrew achieved for Patras in a miraculous way. As Patras was always far from frontiers where war was endemic, it is hard to avoid identifying the miraculous victory mentioned in the poem with the one recorded in ch. 49 of the *De administrando imperio*, if only because this is the only instance where St

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[16] *Analecta Hymnica*, 549.
[17] *Analecta Hymnica*, 551.
[18] *Analecta Hymnica*, 547.
[19] *Analecta Hymnica*, 552.
[20] *Analecta Hymnica*, 553.
[21] Cf. *ODB*, 3, 1597-1598.

Andrew is represented as a military saint. The existence of a second similar instance cannot be excluded, but seems unlikely. After all, from the methodological point of view, the needless multiplication of the miraculous interventions of one saint should be avoided, especially if they do not follow a usual pattern.[22]

Moreover, the poet asks for the saint's support against some barbarians who had revolted — obviously because previously they had been under Byzantine rule (text d). This is a threat contemporary with the period when the poet was writing. Here again, in the neighbourhood of Patras it can concern only the Peloponnesian Slavs, who were regarded as barbarians by the Greeks, and who revolted once *c.* 805 and again during the joint reign of Emperors Theophilos and his son Michael III, i.e. between 840 and 842. This second revolt of the Slavs was successfully resisted and subdued by the *strategos* Theoktistos Bryennios, probably in 842, certainly not much later.[23] Joseph's text can refer only to this second revolt, as the first one took place well before his birth.

Finally, there is a text (f) speaking of an Arab threat. It is true that this threat is almost a topos in 9th- and 10th-century texts, when the main military effort of Byzantium was directed towards withstanding the Arab onslaught on land and sea. It is conceivable that such prayers could be sung in Patras in the hope that they would bring a Byzantine victory on the eastern frontier. But not necessarily: it is equally possible that the poet (and his patrons from Patras) were thinking of Arab raids against the western shores of the Peloponnese, in their own neighbourhood. One such raid, made in collaboration with the revolted Slavs, is attested in 805. In 841 Joseph the Hymnographer himself, while attempting to cross to Italy, fell into the hands of Cretan Arabs and spent one year in captivity. Several other such raids against western Peloponnese and the Ionian islands are attested in the 9th century.[24] Our text could refer to one of them.

The life and the work of Joseph the Hymnographer has been studied in a doctoral dissertation,[25] the contents of which have subsequently been substantially improved upon.[26] Joseph, born in Sicily some time between 810 and 816, left his homeland for the Peloponnese, then went to Thessalonica where he became a monk, was ordained priest, and went to Constantinople. In 841 he was sent as an ambassador to Pope Gregory IV, but on his way he was caught by Arab pirates and was taken to prison in Crete. Liberated one year later, he returned to Constantinople, where he lived and wrote most of his poems — except for a period of exile in Cherson — until he died in 883 or 886.

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[22] The saint is mentioned as the protector of Patras in the later poems by Triantaphyllou, *'Ιστορικὸν Λεξικὸν τῶν Πατρῶν*, 20.

[23] The revolt and the ensuing conflicts are described in *De administrando imperio*, ch. 50, l. 1-25; the events are dated by Jenkins in *Commentary*, 185, cf. Litavrin, 434. Ch. 50 contains a chronicle of the Slav revolts of the Peloponnese in the 9th and 10th centuries. As the next revolt mentioned therein dates from the reign of Romanos I (921-944), it cannot be taken into consideration here for obvious chronological reasons.

[24] Cf. D. Zakythinos, "Ἅγιος Βάρβαρος", Τόμος *εἰς μνήμην* Κ. Ἀμάντου (Athens, 1960), 446 ff.

The death of Joseph is a secure *terminus ante* for the composition of our poem. It is conceivable that a delegation of the inhabitants of Patras or the metropolitan himself came to the famous poet and commissioned the poem (or poems, if we accept the hypothesis of the eight canons). This could have been done any time before Joseph's death. But the internal evidence points to a rather early date: 840–842 is the revolt of the Peloponnesian Slavs, and at the same time a raid of Arab pirates is attested. And the poet makes reference to those events as though they were contemporary with him.

Moreover, at the same time, in 841, Joseph was travelling west towards Italy. We know that in the 9th century travel from Constantinople to the west had become complicated because of the presence of unruly Slavs in the Balkans and Arab pirates in all waters. The Via Egnatia, already difficult at the Strymon pass, was not a practicable route to the west of Thessalonica. To take the boat to Italy, travellers had to go south via the Tempe to the gulf of Corinth, to Corinth itself or Naupaktos or further west. This itinerary was followed by Joseph himself on his way from Palermo to Thessalonica, as well as by St Elias the Younger and by Liutprand of Cremona in the 10th century. It is also mentioned in several passages of the Life of St Luke.[27] Then travellers took the boat for as short a crossing as possible to Italy. Patras is known to have been a stop for foreigners coming to Byzantium or sailing away.[28]

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[25] E. Tomadakes, *Ἰωσὴφ ὁ Ὑμνογράφος. Βίος καὶ ἔργον* (Athens, 1971).

[26] D. Stiernon, "La vie et l'œuvre de S. Joseph l'Hymnographe. À propos d'une publication récente", *REB* 31 (1973), 243–266.

[27] A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Monumenta graeca et latina ad historiam Photii patriarchae pertinentia*, II (St Petersburg, 1901), 3; Liutprand, *Legatio*, paragr. 58; other texts I put together in "The First Century of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas", *DOP* 46 (1992), 245–256, esp. 254. N. Oikonomides, The Byzantine Via Egnatia (forthcoming).

[28] *De administrando imperio*, ch. 49, l. 66–67; *Vita di S. Elia il Giovane*, ed. G. Rossi-Taibbi (Palermo, 1962), 56.

And here unfolds a hypothesis: in 841 Joseph could well have travelled by land to Patras to take the boat to Italy.[29] During his stop there, in a city where he may have found acquaintances from the past, he could have, on his own initiative or, rather, on commission, written the canon that we have studied. Then he went away to his capture. We can say with certainty that the two chronological indications provided by the text, the Slav revolt and the Arab raid in the region of Patras, were both attested in 841 from sources independent from Joseph's canon. Of course, all this could as well be the result of a coincidence: possible, but not very likely.

Be that as it may, what is certain is that the Slav revolt and siege of Patras in *c.* 805 is now attested by a source much closer to the events than what was previously thought. This was obviously not a later invention, but reflected some real, albeit exaggerated and mystified, facts, which were common knowledge to the inhabitants of Patras. The legend of St Andrew as protector of the city was by then in full evolution, strongly resembling the model of St Demetrios, the protector of Thessalonica against the Slavs — so much so, that in Joseph's canon we find the one and only known mention of *myron* issuing from St Andrew's tomb, as this was currently happening at the tomb of his Thessalonian counterpart.[30] It is certain that all this was good propaganda for the new metropolis of Patras, created in 806 with three suffragans, Methone, Korone and Lakedaimonia.[31]

Now, as the events are mentioned in a legendary or panegyric context, their dimensions are clearly exaggerated. The *De administrando imperio*, the poem of Joseph, and the later, synodal decision of Patriarch Nicholas III, all describe a major operation in which a whole nation was crushed and subdued by the intervention of the saint; yet in the *De administrando imperio* it is also said that this nation attacked only the region of Patras, was defeated by one sally of the inhabitants of the city, took refuge at the saint's church outside the walls, and was afterwards put in servitude and made subject to the metropolis of Patras — all pieces of information showing that the numbers involved were not as vast as the hagiographers have us believe. The events of *c.* 805 certainly prompted the elevation of Patras to the rank of metropolis and served as a pretext for giving to the metropolitan a number of peasant servants, taken from an ethnic group of the region. But their number was certainly not very high, as their main task was to provide hospitality to imperial officials and ambassadors passing through, thereby relieving the metropolis of this obligation. What happened in *c.* 805 seems to have been a local revolt of people already made subject to Byzantium, no doubt as a consequence of major campaigns, such as those of Staurakios in 783[32] or of the *strategos* of Peloponnese named Skleros around the year 800.[33] On this point, my evaluation of the situation in the North-West of the Peloponnese in the early 9th century differs sharply from that of other specialists.[34]

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[29] The biographer does not specify where he took the boat from: Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Monumenta*, 6.

[30] A spring of holy water (ἁγίασμα) is attested near St Andrew's sarcophagus, but nothing is said of *myron*: S. Thomopoulos, Ἱστορία τῆς πόλεως Πατρῶν, 2nd ed. (Patras, 1950), 206 ff.; Triantaphyllou, Ἱστορικὸν Λεξικὸν τῶν Πατρῶν, 22. — On the other hand, it must be noted that the *myron* of St Demetrios is attested late in the sources (*c.* 10th c.) but it is not impossible that its cult had appeared earlier (8th or 9th c.). [*Editor's note*: Cf. A.-M. Talbot's article, p. 49 ff., above.]

[31] V. Laurent, "La date de l'érection des métropoles de Patras et de Lacédémone", *REB* 21 (1963), 129-141.

What happened in the Peloponnese during the 8th century is vaguely known to us from the Chronicle "of Monembasia", the reliability of which has been challenged. Yet, it certainly contains reliable, if not always precise, information, which is corroborated by a wide range of sources. For example, what it says about the withdrawal of Greeks to safer places, as when the inhabitants of Argos went to live on the small island of Orovi,[35] is now confirmed by finds of 8th- and early 9th-century lead seals, showing that a new bishopric was then created on this small island of the Argolic gulf and a military administration installed.[36]

Despite a dearth of sources, all manner of texts may nevertheless prove helpful to historical research, including even ecclesiastical hymnography.

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[32] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig, 1883), 456.

[33] *Cronaca di Monembasia*, ed. I. Dujčev (Palermo, 1976), 18-20.

[34] For example, M. Weithmann, *Die slavische Bevölkerung auf der griechischen Halbinsel* (Munich, 1978), 128-129.

[35] *Cronaca di Monembasia*, 12.

[36] V. Pennas, "The Island of Orovi in the Argolid: Bishopric and Administrative Center", *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 4 (1994), 163-173.

XXV

À PROPOS DE LA PREMIÈRE OCCUPATION BYZANTINE DE LA BULGARIE (971 - ca 986)*

La campagne de Jean Tzimiskès contre les Russes en 971 eut pour résultat l'abolition du royaume bulgare et l'occupation par les Byzantins de la partie orientale de la Bulgarie. Mais les sources narratives, qui décrivent ces opérations sur un ton épique, arrêtent leur récit avec le triomphe que l'empereur organisa à son retour à Constantinople. Il n'est plus question de ce qui s'est passé dans les territoires conquis. Nous apprenons seulement que les trois villes les plus importantes de la Bulgarie orientale, Pliska, la Grande Preslav et la Petite Preslav, furent reconquises par les Byzantins en l'an 1000, ce qui montre qu'entre-temps la domination bulgare y fut restaurée, sans doute à la suite de la grande défaite de Basile II dans les plaines de Sofia en 986. Mais nous ne savons quand après cette défaite.

Nous avons maintenant une documentation nouvelle et très importante au sujet de l'administration byzantine dans les territoires occupés après 971 : les archéologues bulgares ont découvert et fouillé les ruines d'un bâtiment qui semble avoir servi de siège au stratège byzantin de Preslav pendant l'occupation de la ville par les forces impériales. Plus de sept cents sceaux de plomb y ont été découverts ; ils nous renseignent sur la situation qui y prévalait, mais présentent aussi des problèmes d'interprétation[1].

La trouvaille des sceaux de Preslav nous est maintenant bien connue grâce à la publication d'Ivan Jordanov (J) ; elle se rapporte principalement à trois périodes chronologiques : 971-*ca* 986, la première occupation byzantine ; 1000-*ca* 1050, la deuxième occupation byzantine, jusqu'à l'invasion des Petchénègues ; *ca* 1060-*ca* 1088, de la reprise byzantine jusqu'à la deuxième occupation par les

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* Dans ce qui suit nous utilisons les abréviations suivantes :
DOSeals : J. NESBITT, N. OIKONOMIDES, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art* 1, Washington 1991.
J : I. JORDANOV, *Pečatite ot strategijata v Preslav*, Sofia 1993.
Listes : N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des* IX*ᵉ et* X*ᵉ siècles*, Paris 1972.

[1] Plusieurs études sur le sujet ont paru, fondées sur des publications provisoires du même matériel. On consultera en dernier lieu V. TĂPKOVA-ZAIMOVA, L'administration byzantine au Bas-Danube (fin du Xᵉ-XIᵉ s.), *BSl.* 54/1, 1993, p. 95-101, avec indications bibliographiques détaillées.

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Petchénègues, qui suivit leur victoire à Dristra en 1087. En effet, le site fut définitivement abandonné vers cette date. La distinction entre les pièces appartenant aux trois périodes peut se faire avec assez de précision grâce à des critères stylistiques, mais aussi à des critères historiques.

Il faut d'abord noter la présence de quelques pièces certainement antérieures à l'arrivée des Byzantins en 971 : on y a découvert un sceau du tsar bulgare Pierre (927-969) ainsi que deux sceaux du protovestiaire Théophane, datés avec certitude entre 927 et 934 (J 1, 37-38). Il semblerait donc que le bâtiment ait eu un usage administratif au temps du royaume bulgare et ait reçu des correspondances officielles. Car le protovestiaire Théophane, confident de l'empereur Romain I^er^ Lécapène, joua un rôle de premier plan lors du mariage de Pierre de Bulgarie avec la petite-fille de Romain Lécapène en 927. Mais il ne semble pas y avoir d'autres sceaux qu'on puisse attribuer avec certitude à la période précédant 971.

Il reste quelques vestiges sigillographiques du passage de Jean Tzimiskès à Preslav. Je pense aux employés du palais, dont le service ne pouvait s'exercer loin de leur souverain. Par exemple, l'*atriklinès* Euphémios (J 11-14), qui avait pour charge principale de faire respecter l'ordre de préséance aux banquets impériaux ; ou le *nipsistarios* Nikètas (J 20), dont la fonction était d'assister l'empereur pendant ses ablutions : tous les deux précisent sur leurs sceaux, qui datent justement des dernières décennies du X^e^ s., qu'ils étaient attachés au service personnel de l'empereur (τοῦ φιλοχρίστου δεσπότου).

Mais nous disposons aussi d'un matériel plus intéressant pour notre enquête, parce qu'il se rapporte à l'administration provinciale. Nous retrouvons à Preslav les sceaux de plusieurs stratèges provinciaux, dont les commandements apparaissent pour la première fois (et, parfois, seulement là) dans le *taktikon* de l'Escorial, liste de préséance datable entre 971 et 975[2]. Jordanov publie notamment : sept sceaux du protospathaire Andronic, stratège de Béroè, c'est-à-dire de l'actuelle Stara Zagora[3] ; quatre sceaux du protospathaire Isaakios, stratège de Drougoubiteia[4] ; six sceaux du protospathaire Stéphane, stratège du Nouveau Strymon (J 283-288). Le premier, au sud-ouest de Preslav, se trouvait sur le territoire bulgare nouvellement conquis et est représenté par plusieurs sceaux, qui ont tous appartenu à la même personne. Les deux autres, bien plus à l'ouest, se situaient en territoire byzantin sur la frontière byzantino-bulgare traditionnelle ; la présence de sceaux de leurs stratèges à Preslav serait due à un déplacement de troupes plutôt qu'à une correspondance régulière : Drougoubiteia et le Nouveau Strymon seraient administrativement liés à Thessalonique plutôt qu'à Preslav ou la Thrace. À ceux-ci s'ajoute le sceau d'un stratège de Philippoupolis, Constantin Pétros (J 321), dont le poste a dû être créé après la rédaction du *taktikon* de l'Escorial et avant 986. Un stratège de Philippoupolis est pour la première fois attesté dans les sources narratives en 997[5].

Mais les sceaux qui présentent le plus d'intérêt sont ceux des unités administratives byzantines créées dans la partie orientale du royaume bulgare. Nous connaissons les commandements de stratèges ou de ducs suivants :

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[2] *Listes*, p. 255-277.

[3] J 208-214. Un autre stratège de Béroè, Joseph protospathaire *épi tou chrysotriklinou*, est connu par un sceau conservé au Fogg Museum of Art : *DOSeals*, n° 1.64.1.

[4] J 220, 221, 221a et 221b, p. 231-232.

[5] JEAN SKYLITZÈS, éd. THURN, Berlin-New York 1973 (CFHB 5), p. 343.

a) Preslav-Iôannoupolis

Ce fut la capitale bulgare qui, pendant quelque temps, a porté deux noms. Preslav fut appelée I(ô)annoupolis par Jean Tzimiskès en 971[6]. En effet, le *taktikon* de l'Escorial mentionne un stratège de Thrace et d'Iannoupolis (*Listes*, p. 265, l. 9), combinaison de commandements attestée par plusieurs sceaux de Preslav avec la même forme populaire du nom, Iannoupolis au lieu de Iôannoupolis : nous connaissons quatre stratèges de Thrace et Iannoupolis, Nicéphore Xiphias (J 250, un sceau), Staurakios (J 249, un sceau), Théophane (J 245-248, quatre sceaux) et Léon Sarakènopoulos (J 239-244, six sceaux, provenant de quatre *boullôtèria* différents[7], ce qui montre que Léon occupa longtemps ce poste). Nous avons aussi deux stratèges d'Iannoupolis seule, les protospathaires Pierre (J 257-258, deux sceaux) et Katakalon (J 252-256, cinq sceaux). En outre, nous verrons plus loin les sceaux de Léon Sarakènopoulos qui combinait le commandement d'Iôannoupolis avec celui de Dorostolon. Autrement dit, pour une période de quinze à dix-sept ans, nous connaissons les noms de sept stratèges de la ville, donc nous avons la liste quasi complète des gouverneurs byzantins de Preslav lors de sa première occupation byzantine.

En se fondant sur cette documentation, il est important de mieux comprendre ce que signifie la définition d'un commandement par deux noms géographiques. Dans le cas présent, on se demandera que signifie le titre de stratège de Thrace et d'Iôannoupolis et ce d'autant plus que quelques sceaux de stratèges de Thrace seule furent bel et bien découverts à Preslav : deux sceaux du patrice Basile Argyros (J 232, 233) et trois du protospathaire Isaakios (J 234-236). Le thème byzantin de Thrace est bien attesté dès la fin du VII^e s. Au X^e s., la Thrace disposait de quatre régiments mobiles de *scholarioi*, qui étaient disponibles pour des campagnes au loin[8]. Le thème s'étendait en Thrace orientale, à l'ouest du long mur d'Anastase (qui suivait grosso modo la ligne Çatalca-Derkoz) jusqu'aux environs d'Andrinople (qui appartenait au thème de Macédoine) et jusqu'à Debeltos sur la frontière bulgare[9]. Il était donc passablement éloigné de Preslav. Faut-il penser, comme le font la plupart des savants qui se sont occupés de la question, qu'il y a eu fusion des deux commandements, et que Byzance créa une stratégie qui allait des environs de Constantinople jusqu'à l'Haemus et, plus tard, jusqu'au Danube ?

Je crois qu'il y a sur ce point un certain malentendu, parce que nos interprétations partent du principe que le stratège d'un thème exerçait les pouvoirs civil et militaire à l'intérieur de sa province. Ceci est vrai, mais dans ce travail il était secondé par plusieurs fonctionnaires civils, alors que lui-même était avant tout un militaire : le stratège était le commandant en chef de l'armée de son thème.

Pour parler d'une fusion de deux circonscriptions administratives, il faudrait, pour des raisons pratiques, qu'elles soient contiguës. Ceci se vérifie toujours lorsque l'administration civile de deux provinces concernant la collecte des impôts et la justice, est placée entre les mains d'un fonctionnaire. C'est le cas bien connu des juges de l'Hellade et du Péloponnèse. Mais ceci n'est pas nécessairement vrai lorsqu'il s'agit de commandements militaires. Je m'explique en apportant des exemples :

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[6] LÉON LE DIACRE, éd. Bonn, p. 138 ; SKYLITZÈS, p. 298.

[7] J'ai étudié les sceaux émis par Léon Sarakènopoulos et les *boullôtèria* qu'il a utilisés dans : The Lead Blanks Used for Byzantine Seals, *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 1, 1987, p. 97-103.

[8] CONSTANTIN VII PORPHYROGÉNÈTE, *De Caerimoniis aulae byzantinae*, éd. Bonn, p. 652, 655, 660, 666.

[9] L'étendue géographique du thème est connue grâce au *Livre des Thèmes* de CONSTANTIN VII PORPHYROGÉNÈTE (éd. A. PERTUSI, p. 84-86).

En septembre 995, un privilège fut délivré au monastère athonite d'Iviron par le patrice Jean Chaldos, duc des Arméniaques, des Bucellaires et de Thessalonique[10]. En réalité, Jean Chaldos était duc de Thessalonique, mais comme il devait défendre la ville contre les attaques des Bulgares de Samuel (lors d'une telle attaque, il sera lui-même fait prisonnier en 996), il avait reçu en renforts les contingents militaires de deux thèmes d'Asie Mineure. D'où sa titulature, qui ne pouvait naturellement pas correspondre à des devoirs administratifs, pour des raisons géographiques évidentes.

L'exemple de Jean Chaldos est éloquent. Il peut être appuyé par une série d'autres exemples. Ainsi, nous disposons des sceaux de Pothos stratège de l'Hellade et de la Sicile, de Syméon stratège de Céphalonie et de Longobardie, et de Théodose stratège de Céphalonie et de Longobardie[11]. On trouvera des exemples mieux documentés de cette pratique dans la prosopographie des gouverneurs byzantins d'Italie :

Nicéphore Phokas *monostratègos* des thèmes d'Occident, à savoir Thrace, Macédoine, Céphalonie, Longobardie, Calabre, conduisait des opérations en Italie en 885-886 ;

Symbatikios *stratigos Macedonie, Tracie, Cephalonie atque Longobardie* conduisait des opérations à Benevento en 891 et 892 ;

Georges *stratigos Cephalonie atque Longobardie* conduisait aussi des opérations à Benevento en 892-894[12].

Dans tous les cas qui précèdent, il est clair qu'il ne peut s'agir que de combinaisons de commandements militaires, décidées en vue de certaines opérations bien précises. De plus, il ressort aussi à l'évidence, que l'endroit où les opérations en question sont conduites, est celui qui est mentionné le dernier dans l'énumération des commandements.

Autrement dit, à la lumière des exemples ci-dessus, les sceaux de Preslav signifient que l'armée de Thrace était placée sous les ordres du stratège d'Iôannoupolis /Preslav pendant une période assez longue, puisque au moins quatre titulaires se sont remplacés à ce poste. Cette situation de mobilisation pour protéger Iôannoupolis, est aussi attestée dans le *taktikon* de l'Escorial.

b) La Mésopotamie de l'Occident

Le *taktikon* de l'Escorial mentionne aussi un stratège de la Mésopotamie de l'Occident (*Listes*, p. 296, l. 16) ; il cite encore un katépano de Mésopotamie (*Listes*, p. 263, l. 31), qui aurait été, à mon avis, le commandant de la cavalerie lourde des *tagmata* stationnée dans la même région que le stratège de la Mésopotamie de l'Occident ; et j'ai proposé de placer ce commandement mésopotamien dans la région du Bas-Danube, sur la rive gauche, ou dans les îles fortifiées sises dans le cours du fleuve, ou dans la région du delta[13]. Cette localisation générale a été confirmée par la découverte à Preslav de deux sceaux ayant appartenu à Damien Dobromir, anthypatos, patrice et duc de Thrace et de Mésopotamie pendant la première occupation byzantine de Preslav (J 237, 238). C'était certainement un Slave, probablement bulgare, un collaborateur des Byzantins qui s'était vu confier un poste de responsabilité par l'empereur, sans doute parce que ses adversaires potentiels n'étaient pas les Bulgares – je suppose que ses adversaires étaient des Russes, et, par conséquent, j'aurais tendance à dater ces sceaux en 971 ou tout de suite après ; une date plutôt haute expliquerait aussi le petit nombre de sceaux conservés de ce commandement.

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[10] J. LEFORT, N. OIKONOMIDÈS, D. PAPACHRYSSANTHOU, H. MÉTRÉVÉLI, *Actes d'Iviron* I, Paris 1985, n° 8.

[11] *DOSeals*, n^{os} 1.3.3, 1.3.4, 1.5.22.

[12] V. VON FALKENHAUSEN, *La dominazione bizantina nell'Italia meridionale dal IX all'XI secolo*, Bari 1978, p. 77-79.

Ces deux plombs trouvés à Preslav fournissent donc deux informations : 1°) qu'un commandant de la Mésopotamie de l'Occident portait le titre de duc, donc un titre de même niveau que celui de katépano[14], qui est attesté dans le *taktikon* de l'Escorial, et avec les mêmes attributions que celui-ci, le commandement de la cavalerie des *tagmata* ; 2°) que pendant une certaine période, à une époque où les Byzantins étaient menacés par un ennemi autre que les Bulgares, probablement les Russes (donc en 971 ou peu après), l'armée de Thrace fut assignée à appuyer les troupes de la Mésopotamie de l'Occident.

Il semblerait que le commandement de la Mésopotamie de l'Occident n'ait pas duré longtemps, car il n'est pas attesté ailleurs. Il ne semble pas avoir survécu au retour de Samuel en Bulgarie orientale. S'il se trouvait effectivement près du delta du Danube, il a pu être remplacé, lors de la deuxième occupation byzantine (après l'an 1000), par le commandement byzantin de Preslavitza, la Petite Preslav (Prislavica /Nufărul) au delta du Danube : les sceaux de stratèges de Preslavitza postérieurs à l'an 1000 ont été retrouvés en nombre considérable à Preslav (J 304-312).

Tout ceci serait tout à fait clair si l'on n'y avait pas trouvé un autre sceau du XI^e^ s. ayant appartenu à un certain Michel (?) vestarchès et katépano de Mésopotamie (J 282). L'éditeur attribue cette pièce à la Mésopotamie d'Orient et explique sa présence à Preslav par un échange de correspondance. Je crois cette attribution acceptable, étant donné que le terme Mésopotamie n'apparaît pas dans les Balkans pendant le siècle qui sépare les sceaux de Damien Dobromir de celui de Michel : acceptable mais pas certaine[15].

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[13] N. OIKONOMIDÈS, Recherches sur l'histoire du Bas-Danube aux X-XI^{e} siècles : la Mésopotamie de l'Occident, *RÉSEE* 3, 1965, p. 57-79. Cf. en tout dernier lieu, H.-J. KÜHN, *Die byzantinische Armee im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert*, Vienne 1991, p. 221-222.

[14] L'équivalence en substance des titres de duc et de katépano aux X^{e}/XI^{e} s. a été soutenue par H. AHRWEILER, Recherches sur l'administration de l'empire byzantin aux IX^{e}-XI^{e} siècles, *BCH* 84, 1960, p. 64-65 et rejetée par T. WASILEWSKI, Les titres de duc, catépan et pronoètès dans l'empire byzantin du IX^{e} jusqu'au XII^{e} siècle, *Actes du XIIe Congrès International d'Études byzantines* II, Belgrade 1961, p. 233-239. Pour l'évolution des titres voir maintenant J.-Cl. CHEYNET, Du stratège du thème au duc : chronologie de l'évolution au cours du XI^{e} siècle, *TM* 9, 1985, p. 181-194.

[15] Les choses se présentent d'une manière encore plus compliquée : le sceau d'un *ek prosopou* de Mésopotamie, que l'éditeur date du IX^{e} s., a été découvert en Bulgarie : I. JORDANOV, Vizantijski olovni pečati ot doloto tečenie na Tundža i Marica, dans : *Ekspedicija Marica :*

c) Dorostolon /Dristra

Le stratège de Dristra est attesté dans le *taktikon* de l'Escorial (*Listes*, p. 269, l. 9). Les sceaux de plusieurs stratèges furent découverts à Preslav : un spécimen d'Arkadios, stratège de Dorostolon (J 217), deux de Pierre, stratège de Dristra (J 218, 219), deux de Léon Sarakènopoulos, stratège de Dorostolon (J 215, 216), et vingt de Léon Sarakènopoulos, stratège de Iôannoupolis et Dorostolon (J 259-277, et 271a de la p. 232). Je ne tiens pas compte ici du sceau de David, stratège de Thrace et Dristra, trouvé à Silistra, parce qu'il semble postérieur à la reconquête byzantine de l'an 1000[16].

Il faut noter ici que ce nombre très élevé des sceaux de Léon Sarakènopoulos provient de deux *boullôtèria* seulement (en fait d'un *boullôtèrion*, dont on a dû changer une des matrices, sans doute parce qu'elle était usée) ; ils attestent donc un mandat qui a certainement duré moins longtemps que celui de Thrace et Iôannoupolis, pendant lequel Léon utilisa au moins quatre *boullôtèria*[17]. Le nombre élevé de sceaux qui nous est conservé pourrait s'expliquer seulement si nous supposons que les lettres envoyées par Léon Sarakènopoulos en tant que stratège de Iôannoupolis et Dorostolon sont arrivées au quartier général de Preslav relativement peu de temps avant son abandon par les Byzantins.

Autrement dit, nous supposons que Léon Sarakènopoulos, établi à Preslav, devint stratège de Thrace et Iôannoupolis, poste qu'il occupa pendant longtemps, puis qu'il fut nommé stratège de Dorostolon seul, et que, plus tard, il assura en plus le commandement des troupes de Preslav. Plus tard encore la domination byzantine prit fin en Bulgarie orientale[18].

d) Théodôroupolis

Nous avons quatre sceaux ayant appartenu à Sisinnios, protospathaire impérial et katépano de Théodôroupolis (J 228-231). Ce commandement ne nous est pas connu par ailleurs ; mais le nom de Théodôroupolis s'explique grâce aux récits des historiens grecs qui parlent de la campagne de Jean Tzimiskès en Bulgarie ; ils mentionnent que l'armée byzantine bénéficia de l'appui miraculeux de saint Théodore le Stratélate lors des combats contre les Russes et que l'empereur a voulu remercier le saint. Mais à partir de ce point les récits divergent : selon Léon le Diacre, qui écrivait au X^e^ siècle, Tzimiskès donna le nom de Théodôroupolis à

Arheologičeski Proučvanija, Sofia 1991, p. 125-137, n° 7. Si la pièce date vraiment du IX^e^ s., il ne peut pas s'agir de la Mésopotamie de l'Occident, car ce commandement est impossible avant 971. Mais on peut aussi très difficilement penser à la Mésopotamie d'Orient, car celle-ci fut élevée au rang de thème au début du X^e^ siècle (*Listes*, p. 349) ; mais cette dernière, il faut le rappeler, semble avoir été placée sous les ordres d'un stratège de haute date, dès le début du IX^e^ siècle.Voir W. BRANDES, Überlegungen zur Vorgeschichte des Thema Mesopotamien, *BSl.* 44, 1983, p. 171-177.

[16] Cf. TĂPKOVA-ZAIMOVA, *L'administration* (cité *supra* n. 1), p. 97-98.

[17] *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 1, 1987, p. 98.

[18] Il faut admettre que la chute de Preslav a dû avoir lieu quelque temps plus tard, puisque Léon Sarakènopoulos semble avoir eu le temps de recevoir une promotion au rang de patrice et au poste de comte de l'étable : un de ses sceaux avec ces titres, partiellement déchiffré, a été trouvé à Preslav (J 191).

la ville de Dorostolon, où il laissa une importante garnison[19] ; selon Skylitzès, qui écrivait à la fin du XI^e^ siècle, l'empereur aurait reconstruit, agrandi et embelli l'église où se trouvait la dépouille de saint Théodore le Stratélate, l'aurait dotée de belles propriétés, et aurait changé le nom de la ville où elle se trouvait d'Euchaneia en Théodôroupolis[20]. Cette divergence a donc donné lieu à des discussions à l'occasion de la découverte des sceaux de Preslav. I. Jordanov[21] a proposé d'identifier Théodôroupolis avec la Petite Preslav et cette identification a été acceptée par certains savants bulgares qui ont toutefois exprimé par la suite des réserves. En revanche, P. Diaconu[22] a préféré suivre la version de Skylitzès et placer le commandement du *katépano* Sisinnios à Euchaneia d'Asie Mineure[23], sans être gêné par le fait que les sceaux aient été découverts à Preslav. Je pense que le principe de la territorialité, dont la validité pour les trouvailles sigillographiques vient d'être démontrée[24], doit être appliqué ici. Il n'y a pas de doute, à mon avis, que le *katépano* de Théodôroupolis doive être cherché en Bulgarie. D'ailleurs, les renseignements fournis par les historiens byzantins ne sont pas nécessairement contradictoires et peuvent être conciliés sans rejeter une des versions comme apocryphe. À mon avis, il est plus probable que Jean Tzimiskès ait donné, tout de suite après la victoire, le nom de Théodôroupolis à la ville de Dorostolon, dont le nom contenait déjà le phonème doro- comme le nom de Théodôros ; de ce moment-là datent les sceaux de Sisinnios. Par la suite, une fois rentré à Constantinople, il a décidé d'amplifier son programme et commandé les nouvelles constructions et la nouvelle appellation pour Euchaneia, alors que le nom de Théodôroupolis était abandonné pour Dorostolon. Autrement dit, je pense que Sisinnios fut le premier commandant byzantin de Dorostolon en 971 ; et que le nom traditionnel de la ville, Dristra ou Dorostolon, revint en usage peu de temps après, sous tous ses successeurs, et en tout cas avant 975 (date de la rédaction du *taktikon* de l'Escorial).

e) La présence byzantine à Preslav

J'ai déjà soutenu que la plupart des sceaux de Preslav datant de la première domination byzantine doit provenir d'une archive, que les Byzantins ont abandonnée en toute hâte peu après 986[25]. Quelques-unes des pièces trouvées (nous ne savons pas lesquelles) appartenaient sans doute à la correspondance courante ; mais celles-ci étaient peu nombreuses. Il est évident que le gros du fonds couvre toute la période de 971 jusqu'à la reprise de Preslav par les Bulgares. Par ailleurs, on peut supposer que les sceaux conservés en nombre élevé doivent provenir de fonctionnaires en service peu avant la date d'abandon du bâtiment par les Byzantins. Le cas de Léon Sarakènopoulos, stratège d'Iôannoupolis et Dorostolon, est, me semble-t-il, éloquent.

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[19] LÉON LE DIACRE, p. 158 : τό τε Δορύστολον Θεοδωρούπολιν ἐπ' ὀνόματι τοῦ στρατηλάτου καὶ μάρτυρος Θεοδώρου μετονομάσας.

[20] JEAN SKYLITZÈS, p. 309 : τὸν ναόν, ἐν ᾧ τὸ θεῖον ἀπόκειται σῶμα ἐκ βάθρων καταβαλὼν μέγαν τε καὶ κάλλιστον ᾠκοδόμησε, μεγαλοπρεπεῖς αὐτῷ κτήσεις προσαφορίσας· ὃν καὶ ἀντί Εὐχανείας Θεοδωρόπολιν κατωνόμασεν. Il faut noter que Skylitzès parle ici d'un changement du nom de l'église et non pas de la ville, mais comme ceci n'a pas beaucoup de sens, j'ai admis qu'il s'agit d'une expression abrégée et j'ai traduit en conséquence.

[21] I. JORDANOV, Koj bŭlgarski grad e bil narečen Teodoropol ?, *Vekove* 1983/1, p. 58-62. Cf. TĂPKOVA-ZAIMOVA, *L'administration*, p. 96.

[22] P. DIACONU, Où se trouvait Théodoroupolis, nom consigné sur certains sceaux de la Grande Preslav ?, *Deuxième Congrès International d'Études Bulgares*, *Dokladi* 6, Sofia 1987, p. 437-448.

[23] L'actuel Çorum, cf. mes remarques dans : Le dédoublement de saint Théodore et les villes d'Euchaïta et d'Euchaneia, *An. Boll.* 104, 1986, p. 327-335.

[24] J.-Cl. CHEYNET, C. MORRISSON, Lieux de trouvaille et circulation des sceaux, *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 2, 1990, p. 116.

[25] *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 1, 1987, p. 102.

Or, une archive est importante non seulement pour ce qu'elle contient, mais aussi pour ce qu'elle ne contient pas.

Le bâtiment dans lequel les sceaux ont été découverts avait jadis appartenu à une administration bulgare et fut ensuite occupé par l'armée byzantine. Ceci expliquerait le nombre élevé de sceaux de militaires de l'administration provinciale qui y ont été découverts. En revanche, on est frappé par l'absence totale de sceaux de fonctionnaires civils, par exemple de juges ou de protonotaires ou d'*anagrapheis*, avec mandat à Preslav ou en Bulgarie orientale. On dirait que les régions conquises en 971, bien que commandées par des stratèges et des ducs, n'ont pas reçu une administration civile comparable à celle des autres thèmes – en tout cas nous n'en avons aucune trace sigillographique.

La hiérarchie ecclésiastique est également peu présente à Preslav. Pour la période qui nous intéresse, 971-*ca* 986, on trouve une dizaine de sceaux de clercs constantinopolitains (J 377-386), qui pourraient bien être membres du clergé qui accompagnait l'armée. On trouve deux sceaux d'archevêques qui viennent de loin, de Mésembria et de Brysis (J 387, 390-393) et, surtout, un seul sceau de Stéphane, *théophilestatos*, métropolite d'Iôannoupolis, donc d'un métropolite de Preslav, installé dans la ville après sa prise par Jean Tzimiskès, et probablement soumis directement au patriarcat de Constantinople. Il y a donc eu des autorités ecclésiastiques locales, mais sans doute fut-ce pour un temps limité, puisque cette métropole d'Iôannoupolis n'apparaît dans aucune des *notitiae episcopatuum* connues, et qu'un seul sceau du métropolite est conservé dans les archives du stratège ; le contraste est frappant : 1 sceau de métropolite de Preslav comparé à 41 de stratèges de la même ville, c'est une différence qui s'explique mal, même si l'on pense au caractère militaire du bâtiment. On se demandera combien de temps ce Stéphane est resté en poste et s'il a jamais eu de successeur. Après tout, nous savons que lors de l'invasion byzantine en Bulgarie, les archevêques /patriarches bulgares ont dû fuir de Dristra à Sofia et de là, à l'époque de l'apogée de l'État de Samuel, à Vodéna et à Moglaina avant de finir à Ohrid[26]. Une église d'obédience constantinopolitaine, installée au lendemain de la conquête à Preslav, avait peu de chances d'avoir du succès auprès des populations bulgares. Et elle ne concernait pas les soldats byzantins, qui avaient leur propre clergé et leur propre hiérarchie ecclésiastique.

Au contraire la présence militaire de l'empire est bien attestée à Preslav. À part les commandants locaux, que nous avons mentionnés, on y trouve les sceaux de plusieurs commandants militaires venus de l'extérieur, domestiques des scholes, chefs de *tagmata* constantinopolitains, stratèges de thèmes lointains, comme ceux des Anatoliques (J 199, 200), de Thrace (J 232-233, 234-236), de Macédoine (J 279) et de Cappadoce (J 278). En outre, certains de ces corps importés, notamment les régiments de Thrace, semblent s'être installés pour de bon, tantôt rattachés au commandement de la Mésopotamie de l'Occident, tantôt à celui de Iôannoupolis, sans doute pour parer à une menace, ou pour maintenir l'ordre. L'armée d'Iôannoupolis fut aussi obligée d'aller appuyer celle de Dorostolon. On a l'impression que la première domination byzantine en Bulgarie orientale fut, dès le début, précaire, menacée, appuyée seulement sur la force armée. La tentative d'expansion vers l'ouest, attestée par la création du katépanat de Ras et de la stratégie de Morava n'a pas laissé de traces à Preslav, sans doute parce qu'elle a très peu duré, juste après 971[27]. Rien ne fut fait pour organiser économiquement et administrativement le territoire, peu fut fait pour lui fournir un encadrement spirituel ; et ce fut, semble-t-il, sans succès.

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[26] *BZ* 2, 1893, p. 44-45.

La soumission de la Bulgarie en 971 donna aux Byzantins le territoire et quelques collaborateurs. Mais elle a aussi créé beaucoup de ressentiments et beaucoup d'incertitudes. L'empire fut obligé de maintenir sur place des troupes importées de loin. Si l'on en juge d'après les vestiges sigillographiques qui y ont été découverts, le bâtiment de Preslav semble avoir été le quartier général d'une armée d'occupation qui n'a pas réussi – peut-être n'a-t-elle même pas essayé – à attirer et encadrer les populations locales. Ce fut une armée d'occupation aux ambitions et aux possibilités limitées.

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[27] *DOSeals* 1.33.1 et 1.36a.1 (p. 195-196).

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XXVI

A NOTE ON THE CAMPAIGN OF STAURAKIOS IN THE PELOPONNESE (783/4)

The expedition was similar to such a kind of operations at this time: after the Slavs had been pushed from the plains to the mountains and then besieged, they were forced to surrender during severe winter conditions. That's why Staurakios, after his victory, triumphally entered Constantinople in the middle of the winter, in January 784.

In the year 783, the Byzantine Empire organised an important campaign against the Slavs of Greece, a campaign which is seen by some as a first major step in the *reconquista* of the southern European provinces which were escaping from the direct rule of Constantinople. Our main source for it is the Chronicle of Theophanes the Confessor, an almost contemporary witness, who wrote down his testimony just thirty years after the events. The testimony of other Byzantine chroniclers is devoid of interest because based on the information of Theophanes. Michael the Syrian also mentions the same campaign and in terms similar to those of the Confessor, but also contains gross inaccuracies.[1]

„In this year [782/783] Irene [the Byzantine empress], because she had made peace with the Arabs, found an opportunity to send a large force under the patrician and logothete of the imperial dromos Staurakios against the Sklavinian tribes. He went to Thessalonica and Greece, subjected them all, and made them tributary to the Empire. He also entered the Peloponnese, took many prisoners and much booty and brought it to the Roman Empire.

In this year, the seventh indiction, in January [784] Staurakios returned from the Sklavinias and held a triumphal procession to the hippodrome."[2]

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[1] *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, transl. J.-B. Chabot III, Paris 1905, 13, which places the whole event at the beginning of the reign of Nicephorus I: Stauracius fit une invasion dans la région du Péloponèse, qui était depuis longtemps aux mains des Taiyayê [= arabes]. Il le soumit aux Romains, y établit une garnison et revint, ramenant captive une nombreuse foule de Taiyayê, des troupeaux et des bandes de chevaux et de chameaux.

[2] *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, transl. H. Turtledove, Philadelphia 1982, 142. Cf. Theophanis, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor, I–II, Lipsiae 1883, 1885, I, 456–457: Τούτῳ τῷ ἔτει εἰρηνεύσασα Εἰρήνη μετὰ τῶν Ἀράβων καὶ ἄδειαν εὑροῦσα ἀποστέλλει Σταυράκιον τὸν πατρίκιον καὶ λογοθέτην τοῦ ὀξέος δρόμου μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς κατὰ τῶν Σκλαβινῶν ἐθνῶν. καὶ κατελθὼν ἐπὶ Θεσσαλονίκην καὶ Ἑλλάδα ὑπέταξε πάντας καὶ ὑποφόρους ἐποίησε τῇ βασιλείᾳ. εἰσῆλθε

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Many scholars have discussed these events and tried to evaluate their importance for the 'Slavic question' in Greece.[3] It is true that there is a difference in the expressions used by Theophanes between the passage concerning Greece and the one concerning the Peloponnese. According to Lemerle, Staurakios would have obtained decisive results in Macedonia and Central Greece, while in the Peloponnese he would have undertaken a simple raid for booty, without going much to the interior and without subjugating the Slavs.[4]

I would like first to stress that in the 9th century Latin translation of Theophanes by Anastasius Bibliothecarius instead of Thessalonica, Thessaly is mentioned. There is no doubt that the city of Thessalonica was then firmly in Byzantine hands and that most probably the real campaign of Staurakios started after he had passed through this large city, in Thessaly and central Greece, where Slavic settlements are well attested. The Belegezitai in Thessaly were on good terms with Thessalonica during the Slavic attacks on the city described in the Miracles of St Demetrius[5] and were somehow incorporated into the empire, since we have the VIIIth c. seal of one of their archontes, Tichomir, who was also an imperial spatharios.[6] Another archon of this tribe, named Akamiros, revolted, on the side of the Helladikoi, i. e., the inhabitants or soldiers of the theme of Hellas, against the Empress Irene[7]; one has the impression that Akamiros, at least after the campaign of Staurakios, acted as a subject of the Empire. More to the south, in my opinion at the valley of the Spercheios, at a place known by the ancient and popular name of Hellas, Ellada, there was another important Slavic archontia, of which we have at least two seals of archontes, Peter hypatos (7th/8th c.) and Dargaskabos (8th c.), both issued before the campaign of Staurakios.[8] This also shows that at least some Slavic tribes were already, before 783, incorporated into

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δὲ καὶ ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ καὶ πολλὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν καὶ λάφυρα ἤγαγε τῇ τῶν Ῥωμαίων βασιλέᾳ. Τούτῳ τῷ ἔτει μηνὶ Ἰανουαρίῳ, ἰνδικτιῶνος ζ', κατέλαβε Σταυράκιος ὁ προρρηθεὶς ἐκ τῶν Σκλαβινῶν καὶ ἐθριάμβευσε τὰ ἐπινίκια ἐπὶ ἱπποδρομίας.

[3] I will quote only some relatively recent publications, where one will find the relevant literature: M. Weithmann, *Die slavische Bevölkerung auf der griechischen Halbinsel*, Munich 1978, 120–121; P. Speck, *Kaiser Konstantin VI.*, Munich 1978, 390; Ilse Rochow, *Byzanz im 8. Jahrhundert in der Sicht des Theophanes*, Berlin 1991, 238–239; H. Ditten, *Ethnische Verschiebungen zwischen der Balkanhalbinsel und Kleinasien*, Berlin 1993, 237–240; R.-J. Lilie, *Byzanz unter Eirene und Konstantin VI (780–802)*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, 172–173.

[4] P. Lemerle, La chronique improprement dite de Monemvasie: le contexte historique et légendaire, *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* 21 (1963) 28.

[5] P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de Saint Démétrius* I, Paris 1979, 214–218 and II, Paris 1981, 121–123.

[6] W. Seibt, Siegel als Quelle für Slawenarchonten in Griechenland, *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 6 (1999) 28.

[7] Theophanes, loc. cit., 473–474.

[8] N. Oikonomides, L'archonte slave de l'Hellade au VIIIe siècle, *Vizantijskij Vremennik* 55/2 (1998) 111–118; cf. *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art*, ed. J. Nesbitt and N. Oikonomides, Washington 1995, 2.8.2. Seibt, Siegel als Quelle, 29, considers that these seals could also attest a special command of all the Slavs of the theme of Hellas — but this would have been a unique case, since all other known Slavic archontes are at the head of tribes or groups of a localised character.

the Empire and exercised some kind of self-administration, but under the auspices of the emperor, most probably within the framework of the theme of Hellas, which had already been created before 695. It is possible that with the arrival of new immigrants this framework might have become fragile and that some chieftains might have distanced themselves from the imperial administration. But there is no doubt that the campaign of Staurakios reinvigorated the Byzantine presence in the region and obliged the Slavs to pay taxes and to obey orders — and to feel part of the Empire, as the example of Akamiros seems to show.

In the Peloponnese things were different. I take as granted that, in spite of some raids and wars, the eastern part of the peninsula had remained in Byzantine hands, as we are told in the chronicle of Monembasia and the texts related to it and is attested by archaeological finds.[9] But the central and western Peloponnese were then escaping from Byzantine control and the church was not officially represented there. This becomes obvious from the post-iconoclastic *notitiae episcopatuum*, which give to the metropolis of Corinth authority over five bishoprics of the Peloponnesian mainland (Damalas, Argos, Monembasia, Zemaina and Mani), all in its eastern part, together with two islands, Cephalonia and Zakynthos, situated beyond its western shores, while Patras, which was an archbishopric and became a metropolis in the beginning of the 9th c., has control over six mainland bishoprics, all new ones, situated in the western part of the peninsula (Lakedaimonia, Methoni, Koroni, Bolaina, Moreas, Elos).[10] The new bishoprics of the metropolis of Patras define more or less the part of the peninsula which was not under direct imperial control in the 8th. c. But the islands, more to the west, were firmly in the hands of the Empire, and not only had they bishops (dependents upon the distant metropolitan of Corinth), but they had also been transformed into a theme, as is shown by the 8th c. seals of strategoi of Cephalonia which have been preserved[11] — a theme that was undoubtedly orientated towards the sea but which at the beginning may have also been conceived as a way of handling the arrival and the incorporation into the Empire of the Slav immigrants.

Upon the arrival of Staurakios with his powerful army in the Peloponnese, the Slavs, who had never had a central organisation resembling a state, but rather functioned as a conglomerate of many chiefs, must have felt threatened, especially since from the west the strategos of Cephalonia was always lurking and could take them from the rear. Cornered as they were, they must have put up an effective resistance, not allowing the destruction of their forces; and the operations dragged on in time. The army of Staurakios was certainly pillaging and destroying the countryside — hence the large number of prisoners and the booty which he brought back to Constantinople. But he did not have the opportunity to engage his enemies in a decisive battle, in which a regular army would have had many advantages against an army of peasants or of petty chieftains.

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[9] Anna Avramea, *Le Pélopnnèse du IVe au VIIIe siècle: changements et persistances*, Paris 1997; eadem, Ανέκδοτα μολυβδόβουλλα από τα νησιά του Αργολικού Κόλπου, Σύμμεικτα 10 (1996) 11–25; Vasso Pennas, The Island of Orovi in the Argolid: Bishopric and Administrative Center, *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 4 (1995) 163–173; Lemerle, La chronique, loc. cit., 29.

[10] J. Darrouzès, *Notitiae episcopatuum ecclesiae constantinopolitanae*, Paris 1981, no. 7, 1. 488–495, 549–555. Cf. P. Yannopoulos, Métropoles du Péloponnèse mésobyzantin: un souvenir des invasions avaroslaves, *Byzantion* 63 (1993) 388–400.

[11] Cf. *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals*, 2.1.

A detail in the Chronicle of Theophanes which should, I think, attract our attention is that Staurakios returned to Constantinople in January of 784, when the winter was well advanced, and then held a triumphal procession, no doubt because he had achieved, one way or the other, his objectives.[12]

But keeping an army on campaign late in the year was a very rare phenomenon. If Staurakios returned to Constantinople in January, this means that he must have left the Peloponnese sometime in November of the previous year: the journey from Corinth to Constantinople normally took for a small group approximately one month. The distance is approximately 1200 km. An army with baggage and prisoners and booty could not, on average, advance more than 20 km a day, probably considerably less if one bears in the bad weather which is inevitable after October.[13]

First, the expenses of the army were running all the time that the soldiers were away from their base; and many of the soldiers were recruited for this particular campaign, which meant that they had to be paid for all the time that they were mobilised. This was also true of the holders of military lands, who in my opinion existed at that time and who received a salary when taking part to a campaign away from their base.[14] If the army consisted of mercenaries, the financial burden was even worse. Of course, one can suppose that the army lived off the back of the local people, who willy-nilly provided food and booty. But this policy does not necessarily work all the time, because the enemy usually takes precautions and protects his movable property (the only kind that can be part of the booty) by taking it with him and protecting it, or by destroying it so as not to leave it for the invader to use.

Moreover, there were the problems posed by the weather. In Greece, rains start at the end of September and the weather turns really bad with rain in the plains, cold and eventually snow in the mountains in October–November. In the southern Peloponnese, the average daytime temperature in September is 23.3° C, and goes down to 18.9° in October, 14.9° in November and 12.1° in December. During the same period, the average relative humidity goes up from 64.9 to 73.3.[15] December and January are very bad months for travelling. If Staurakios stayed in the Peloponnese as late as that, he must have had very serious reasons, given that he knew that on his way back he would have to cross northern Greece in bad weather — and this with a heavily equipped army and in increased train of baggage.

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[12] M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory. Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the Early Medieval West*, Cambridge 1986, [177–178 of Italian translation].

[13] Cf. I. Dimitrukas, Ενδείξεις για τη διάρκεια των χερσαίων ταξιδιών και μετακινήσεων στο Βυζάντιο (6ος–11ος αιώνας), Σύμμεικτα 12 (1998) 7–42, esp. 16–17 for travel by heavy armies. See also I. Dimitroukas, Παρατηρήσεις σχετικά με το ταξίδι επιστροφής του Λιουτπράνδου, Σύμμεικτα 11 (1997) 68 and I. Dimitroukas, *Reisen und Verkehr im byzantinischen Reich vom Anfang des 6. Jh. bis zur Mitte des 11. Jh.* I, Athens 1997, 331 ff.

[14] See N. Oikonomides, Middle-Byzantine Provincial Recruits: Salary and Armament, *Gonimos, Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies Presented to L. G. Westerink at 75*, ed. J. Duffy and J. Peradotto, Buffalo 1988, 121–136.

[15] Statistics provided by the Greek Tourist Organisation on the Internet.

I think that the explanation of these particularities may be sought in the campaigns against the rebellious Slavs of the Peloponnese in the 10th c. The information comes from the book known as *De Administrando Imperio* of Constantine Porphyrogennetos.

It was in the reign of Romanos I Lakapenos, in the year 921. The tribes of the Melingoi and the Ezeritai, who lived on Taygetos and in the Helos of Lakonia, „rebelled and neither obeyed the strategos nor regarded the imperial mandate, but were practically independent and self-governing, neither did they accept an archon [appointed] by the strategos, nor agreed to go on campaign with him, nor would they execute any other service for the sake of the state". The strategos of the Peloponnese who received the order to subdue them „began his war against them in the month of March and burned their crops and plundered all their land; but they resisted and were able to bear this situation until the month of November. Then, seeing that they were being exterminated, they begged to negotiate for their submission ..."[16] From this passage it is clear that upon the arrival of the strategos, the Slavs left for the mountains, where the army could not reach them and where resistance was possible and easy. During that time, the strategos remained in the lowlands and plundered and destroyed whatever they had left behind. But when the winter came with cold and the inevitable shortages of supplies, life in the mountains became impossible, and the rebels were obliged to negotiate.

I would suggest a similar scenario for the campaign of Staurakios in the Peloponnese, which occured almost one and a half centuries earlier but in the same region, in the same geographical and climatic context. We do not know how successful his negotiations would have been in 783. But his campaign was perceived as (or was shown to be) a great success by the Empress who authorised a eunuch, Staurakios, to hold this public celebration, usually reserved to emperors. It is significant that some years later a separate theme of the Peloponnese was created, confirming the effective control exercised by the Empire over the peninsula.[17]

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[16] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, ed. Gy. Moravcsik and R. J. H. Jenkins, 2nd ed., Washington 1967, ch. 50, 1. 28–32, esp. 42–45: ἀρξάμενος οὖν πολεμεῖν αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ μηνὸς Μαρτίου καὶ κατακαύσας τὰ θέρη αὐτῶν καὶ ληισάμενος πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν αὐτῶν, ἔσχεν αὐτοὺς ἀνθισταμένους καὶ ἀντέχοντας μέχρι μηνὸς Νοεμβρίου, ἀπὸ τότε δὲ ἰδόντες τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἐξολόθρευσιν.. For the date see Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio* II, Commentary ed. R. J. H. Jenkins, London 1962, 186.

[17] For the creation of the theme of the Peloponnese, see the recent study of T. Živković, The Date of the Creation of the Theme of Peloponnese, Σύμμεικτα 13 (1999) 141–155 (with the previous bibliography).

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XXVII

POUR UNE NOUVELLE LECTURE DES INSCRIPTIONS DE SKRIPOU EN BÉOTIE

L'église de Skripou à Orchoménos (Orchomène) en Béotie, près de Lébadeia, est une belle construction du IX^{e} siècle datée par des inscriptions de l'an 873/874[1]. Elle est dédiée aujourd'hui à la Dormition de la Vierge. Au Moyen Âge, elle avait une triple dédicace, à la Vierge, à saint Pierre et à saint Paul. Elle était alors voisine du lac Kopais, qui a été définitivement asséché au XIX^{e} siècle. Elle était donc, et est encore, située dans une région particulièrement fertile. L'église a aussi servi d'église conventuelle[2].

Le nom Skripou, qui était au XIX^{e} siècle le nom du village d'Orchoménos, où l'église est située, est peut-être attesté dès le X^{e} siècle : dans le *Livre des Cérémonies* de Constantin VII Porphyrogénète, il est question d'un *archôn Chrèpou* ; et dans le cadastre de Thèbes d'un *abydikos* de *Chrèpou* ; on a souvent considéré ce nom comme une déformation du nom Euripos, jusqu'à ce que Nicolas Svoronos ait proposé le rapprochement, fondé sur la ressemblance de nom, avec Skripou[3]. Sans doute ce rapprochement fut-il contesté par la suite, mais sans arguments dirimants[4]. S'il se révélait exact, on devrait considérer Skripou comme un centre administratif d'une certaine importance, avec un *archôn* (officier maritime ? ou chef d'une peuplade de la région ?) et un *abydikos* (agent fiscal, chargé — me semble-t-il — des déplacements d'hommes et de marchandises vers l'étranger[5]). Mais pour l'instant rien de tout cela n'est sûr.

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[1] Publications fondamentales : Maria SOTÈRIOU, « Ὁ ναὸς τῆς Σκριποῦς τῆς Βοιωτίας », *Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐφημερίς* 1931, p. 119-157 ; A. H. S. MEGAW, « The Skripou Screen », *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 61, 1966, p. 1-32.

[2] SOTÈRIOU (citée n. 1), p. 121.

[3] N. SVORONOS, « Recherches sur le cadastre byzantin et la fiscalité aux XI^{e} et XII^{e} siècles : le Cadastre de Thèbes », *BCH* 83, 1959, p. 72, n. 2 ; cf. Hélène AHRWEILER, *Byzance et la Mer*, Paris 1967, p. 58, 60, 101.

[4] J. KODER et F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia*, Tabula Imperii Byzantini 1, Vienne 1976, p. 62, n. 148.

[5] J'ai dit comment je comprends le titre d'*abydikos* dans « Le kommerkion d'Abydos, Thessalonique et le commerce bulgare au IX^{e} siècle », dans *Hommes et Richesses dans l'Empire byzantin*, II, V. Kravari, J. Lefort, C. Morrisson éd., Paris 1991, p. 241-248.

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Et, en tout cas, comme nous verrons, le nom ancien d'Orchoménos était encore vivant au IX^e siècle, lorsque l'église actuelle fut construite.

Comme il a déjà été souligné par plusieurs auteurs, et notamment par A. H. S. Megaw, la construction de Skripou s'inscrit dans le cadre d'une série de nouvelles fondations qui montrent, en ces années, une effervescence dans la partie Sud de la péninsule des Balkans, et qui ont peut-être servi à y raffermir la domination chrétienne et byzantine. Le hasard de la préservation des inscriptions nous donne les éléments suivants. En 871, un couple athénien, Constantin et Anastasô, avec leur fils Jean, drongaire impérial, fondent l'église de Saint-Jean-Prodrome-Mangoutis aux environs d'Athènes[6]. En 871/872, le candidat impérial Basile fonde l'église de Saint-Jean-le-Théologien à Thèbes et la dote d'une inscription de fondation aussi bien que d'une inscription métrique en dodécasyllabes iambiques[7]. Et en 873/874, le protospathaire *épi tôn oikeiakôn* Léon fonde l'église de Skripou, qui était sans doute l'église la plus imposante des trois. Toutes ces constructions ont à leur origine des hommes affiliés à l'administration impériale ou à la hiérarchie des honneurs de Constantinople. Et les auteurs des inscriptions ne sont pas mécontents de montrer qu'ils ne sont pas étrangers à la culture classique qui retrouve désormais sa place dans ce qu'on a appelé le premier humanisme byzantin.

Plusieurs éléments architecturaux pris à des temples anciens ont été remployés dans la construction de Skripou, y compris des tambours de colonnes. Cela ne surprend guère, puisque l'église est située au voisinage immédiat des antiquités de l'ancien Orchoménos. En outre, l'église a été équipée dès l'origine d'un cadran solaire et de plusieurs sculptures contemporaines de sa construction : frises, panneaux, poutres, tous décorés de motifs géométriques, avec des motifs floraux et des animaux réels ou imaginaires. Elle possédait aussi un *templon* richement décoré. On a soutenu avec force arguments que ces sculptures devaient être attribuées à un atelier local, celui qui avait décoré deux ans plus tôt l'église de Saint-Jean-le-Théologien à Thèbes : cet atelier suivait, semble-t-il, de près la mode constantinopolitaine[8].

Toutes ces décorations étaient sculptées dans un marbre gris, mais aussi, parfois, sur des plaques taillées dans une pierre brune et poreuse. Cette pierre, mais aussi les grandes dalles de marbre gris, qui provenaient toutes d'un temple ou d'un cimetière antiques, furent utilisées pour la construction des murs. Il s'agissait donc d'une église de luxe, dont la partie inférieure, au-dessous des fenêtres des tympans, semble être restée intacte depuis le IX^e siècle, alors que la partie supérieure et le toit semblent avoir été largement réparés au XVIII^e siècle.

Les inscriptions de Skripou sont connues depuis longtemps. La dernière et meilleure édition est due à Maria Sotèriou[9]. Trois inscriptions commémorent la fondation, une quatrième est une sorte de bref panégyrique en vers. Les trois premières sont gravées sur des plaques de pierre brunâtre assez commune dans la région, dont sont aussi faits les blocs taillés des murs et les tambours de colonnes pris dans les murs, tous éléments remployés. La quatrième est gravée sur un gros bloc de marbre blanc de qualité médiocre, dont un seul côté est lisse, celui sur lequel est gravée l'inscription — et ce côté, le seul resté découvert pendant des siècles, a souffert des vents et des changements de température, de sorte que sa surface est remplie de petits creux : c'est là une autre particularité qui distingue cette pierre de toutes les autres utilisées pour l'église.

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[6] A. XYNGOPOULOS, *Εὑρετήριον τῶν μνημείων τῆς Ἑλλάδος Α. Εὑρετήριον τῶν Μεσαιωνικῶν μνημείων*, I, *Ἀθηνῶν*, fasc. 2, Athènes 1929, p. 85-87. Cf. KONSTANTOPOULOS, « Ἐπιγραφὴ ἐκ τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου Μαγκούτη », *EEBS* 8, 1931, p. 253.

[7] G. A. SOTIRIOU, « Ὁ ἐν Θήβαις βυζαντινὸς ναὸς Γρηγορίου τοῦ Θεολόγου », *Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐφημερίς* 1924, p. 1-26.

[8] MEGAW (cité n. 1), p. 25 s.

[9] SOTÈRIOU (citée n. 1), p. 153-157.

Comme le montrent les inscriptions, l'église de Skripou avait, en 873/874, une « triple » dédicace : la nef centrale était dédiée à la Vierge, alors que la nef Nord était dédiée à saint Paul et la nef Sud à saint Pierre.

Sur le côté extérieur de l'abside centrale, il y a une longue inscription sur sept plaques hautes de 32 cm, longues de 95-150 cm ; elles forment une surface continue qui suit la courbure de l'abside. Une huitième plaque, tout au début, est plus courte (78 cm), et ne garde sa hauteur initiale de 32 cm qu'à son extrémité droite ; dans la partie inférieure elle a été cassée, et par endroits délibérément coupée, avant d'être sculptée ; pour cette raison, elle présente des trous que le graveur a sautés pour continuer à écrire. Les plaques sont toutes d'une pierre poreuse locale qui se retrouve ailleurs dans le bâtiment.

1/ L'inscription principale (planche I, 1-8) est somptueusement gravée. Elle commence par une croix inscrite dans un carré, et est entourée de deux lignes d'une décoration sculptée, fleurons placés entre deux rangées de gouttes. Ce décor ressemble à celui des frontons de l'église. Au milieu se trouve l'inscription en grandes lettres en relief, sans accents ni abréviations, d'une écriture courante pour le IX^{e} siècle. À cette inscription fut ajoutée la plaque accidentée, divisée en trois lignes égales, dans un effort pour faire le meilleur usage possible de la pierre ; elle n'a pas de décoration, et contient seulement la mention des empereurs. Ici aussi les lettres sont en relief.

> † ΠΑΝΑΓΗΑ ΘΕΟΤΩΚΕ ΣΥΝ ΤΟ
> ΜΟΝΩΓΕΝΗ ΣΟΥ ΙΥΩ ΒΟΗΘΙ Τ-
> ΟΥ ΣΟΥ ΔΟΥΛΟΥ ΛΕΩΝΤΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΗΚΟΥ
> ΠΡΟΤΩΣΠΑΘΑΡΙΟΥ ΚΕ ΕΠΗ ΤΟΝ ΟΙΚΗ-
> ΑΚΩΝ ΣΥΝ ΤΙ ΣΥΝΕΥΝΩ ΚΕ ΤΥΣ ΦΙΛΤΑΤΥΣ ΤΕΚ-
> ΝΥΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΚ ΠΟΘΟΥ ΚΕ ΠΗΣΤΕΟΣ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΙΣ ΑΝΑΣ-
> ΤΙΣΑΝΤΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΣΟΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΝΑΟΝ ΑΜΗΝ.
>
> † ΕΠΗ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΟΥ Κ(ΑΙ) ΚΟΝΣΤΑΝΤΗΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΛΕΩΝΤΟΣ
> † ΤΟΝ ΘΗΩΤΑΤΟΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΤΟΝ
> ΡΩΜΕΟΝ

L'inscription comporte plusieurs fautes d'orthographe. Son texte rétabli en grec correct se lit comme suit :

Παναγία Θεοτόκε σὺν τῷ μονογενεῖ σου υἱῷ βοήθει τοῦ σοῦ δούλου Λέοντος βασιλικοῦ πρωτοσπαθαρίου καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν οἰκειακῶν σὺν τῇ συνεύνῳ καὶ τοῖς φιλτάτοις τέκνοις αὐτοῦ ἐκ πόθου καὶ πίστεως μεγίστης ἀναστήσαντος τὸν σὸν ἅγιον ναόν. Ἀμήν.
Ἐπὶ Βασιλείου καὶ Κωνσταντίνου καὶ Λέοντος τῶν θειοτάτων βασιλέων τῶν Ῥωμαίων.

Traduction : Très sainte Mère de Dieu avec ton fils unique, aide ton serviteur Léon protospathaire impérial et *épi tôn oikeiakôn* avec sa femme et ses très chers enfants, qui a (re)construit ta sainte église à cause de son désir et sa très grande foi.
Sous Basile et Constantin et Léon les très divins empereurs des Romains.

Il y a beaucoup de fautes d'orthographe : 43,8 % des syllabes susceptibles de contenir une faute sont écrites de façon erronée. Par contre, la grammaire phonétique et la syntaxe de l'inscription sont raisonnablement correctes, si l'on tient compte du fait que la construction du verbe βοηθῶ avec un génitif est courante au IX^{e} siècle, en particulier sur les sceaux.

2/ Sur le mur Sud de l'église se trouve la deuxième inscription, inscrite sur une plaque remployée de pierre grise, de 1,30 × 0,59 m (cf. planche II). En marge de la plaque, il y a une série de rondelles avec fleurons, motifs dont l'exécution fait penser au même atelier de Thèbes. La partie centrale de la plaque, divisée en huit par des lignes droites en relief, contient l'inscription, elle aussi en relief, qui remplit parfaitement tout l'espace disponible, ce qui démontre un soin remarquable de la part du graveur.

† ΕΚΑΛΛΗΕΡΓΗΣΕΝ ΤΩΝ ΝΑΟΝ ΤΟΥ Α-
ΓΙΟΥ ΠΕΤΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΚΩΡΥΦΕΟΥ ΤΩΝ
ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ ΛΕΟΝ Ω ΠΑΝΕΥΦΙ-
ΜΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΗΚΟΣ ΠΡΟΤΟΣΠΑΘΑΡΗ-
ΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΗ ΤΩΝ ΥΚΗΑΚΩΝ ΥΠΕΡ
ΛΥΤΡΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΑΦΕΣΕΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΟΛΛΩΝ
ΑΥΤΟΥ ΑΜΑΡΤΗΟΝ ΕΠΗ ΙΓΝΑΤΗΟΥ
ΤΟΥ ΥΚΟΥΜΕΝΗΚΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ ΑΜΗΝ

Le texte rétabli en grec correct se lit comme suit :

† ’Εκαλλιέργησεν τὸν ναὸν τοῦ ἁγίου Πέτρου τοῦ κορυφαίου τῶν ἀποστόλων Λέων ὁ πανεύφημος βασιλικὸς πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν οἰκειακῶν ὑπὲρ λύτρου καὶ ἀφέσεως τῶν πολλῶν αὐτοῦ ἁμαρτιῶν ἐπὶ ’Ιγνατίου τοῦ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου. ’Αμήν.

Traduction : Léon le fameux protospathaire *épi tôn oikeiakôn* a bien construit l'église de saint Pierre le coryphée des apôtres pour racheter et pour se faire pardonner ses nombreux péchés; sous Ignace le patriarche œcuménique. Amen.

Ici aussi, il y a beaucoup de fautes d'orthographe : 37,8 % des syllabes susceptibles de contenir une faute sont écrites de façon erronée.

3/ Sur le mur Nord de l'église se trouve la troisième inscription, inscrite sur une plaque carrée remployée de pierre grise, de 0,76 × 0,78 m (cf. planche III). En marge de la plaque, il y a encore une série de rondelles avec fleurons, alors que la partie centrale, divisée en onze par des lignes droites en relief, contient l'inscription, elle aussi en relief, qui remplit parfaitement tout l'espace disponible.

† ΕΚΑΛΗΕΡΓΗΣΕΝ Τ-
ΟΝ ΝΑΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΑΥ-
ΛΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΥ ΛΕ-
ΟΝ Ο ΠΑΝΕΥΦΙΜΟΣ ΒΑΣΗ-
ΛΗΚΟΣ ΠΡΟΤΟΣΠΑΘΑΡΙΟ-
Σ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΗ ΤΩΝ ΥΚΙΑΚΟΝ ΥΠ-
ΕΡ ΛΥΤΡΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΑΦΕΣΕΟΣ ΤΟΝ
ΠΟΛΛΩΝ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΑΜΑΡΤΗ-
ΩΝ ΕΤΟΥΣ ΑΠΟ ΚΤΗΣΕΟΣ ΚΟΣ-
ΜΟΥ ΕΞΑΚΙΣΧΗΛΙΟΣΤΟ ΤΡΙΑΚ-
ΟΣΗΟΣΤΩ ΟΓΔΟΗΚΟΣΤΩ Β

Le texte rétabli en grec correct se lit comme suit :

Ἐκαλλιέργησεν τὸν ναὸν τοῦ ἁγίου Παύλου τοῦ ἀποστόλου Λέων ὁ πανεύφημος βασιλικὸς πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν οἰκειακῶν ὑπὲρ λύτρου καὶ ἀφέσεως τῶν πολλῶν αὐτοῦ ἁμαρτιῶν ἔτους ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου ἑξακισχιλιοστῷ τριακοσιοστῷ ὀγδοηκοστῷ β΄.

Traduction : Léon le fameux protospathaire et *épi tôn oikeiakôn* a bien construit l'église de l'apôtre saint Paul pour racheter et pour se faire pardonner ses nombreux péchés, en l'an 6382 depuis la création du monde.

Ici aussi il y a beaucoup de fautes d'orthographe : 29 % des syllabes susceptibles de contenir une faute sont écrites de façon erronée. De plus, cette inscription contient un solécisme dans l'expression de la date, qui commence au génitif et continue au datif.

Les trois inscriptions semblent avoir été gravées par le même atelier de sculpteurs, sans doute l'atelier thébain auquel sont attribuées toutes les décorations sculptées de Skripou. Leur auteur, qui connaissait bien la langue grecque, mais moins bien les règles de l'orthographe, aurait été un grécophone de culture limitée.

4/ La quatrième inscription se trouve sur la façade Ouest du narthex, au coin gauche (cf. planche IV). Elle est gravée sur un bloc de marbre complètement différent de toutes les autres pierres se trouvant dans les murs de l'église ou aux alentours. La surface, de 0,86 x 0,60, dépourvue de décoration sculptée, est divisée en douze lignes, avec une marge importante en haut et une autre plus étroite en bas. Les lettres sont gravées en creux — et non pas, comme c'était le cas pour toutes les autres inscriptions, en relief. Il s'agit d'une épigramme à valeur de panégyrique, formée de douze vers héroïques. Chaque vers occupe une ligne de l'inscription.

† ΟΥ ΦΘΟΝΟΣ ΟΥΔΕ ΧΡΟΝΟΣ ΠΕΡΙΜΗΚΕΤΟΣ ΕΡΓΑ ΚΑΛΥΨΕΙ
ΣΩΝ ΚΑΜΑΤΩΝ ΠΑΝΑΡΙΣΤΕ ΒΥΘΩ ΠΟΛΥΧΑΝΔΕΙ ΛΗΘΗΣ
ΕΡΓΑ ΕΠΕΙ ΒΟΟΩΣΙ ΚΑΙ ΟΥ ΛΑΛΕΟΝΤΑ ΠΕΡ ΕΜΠΗΣ
ΚΑΙ ΤΟΔΕ ΓΑΡ ΤΕΜΕΝΟΣ ΠΑΝΑΟΙΔΙΜΟΝ ΕΞΕΤΕΛΕΣΑΣ
ΜΗΤΡΟΣ ΑΠΕΙΡΟΓ ΑΜΟΥ ΘΕΟΔΕΓΜΟΝΟΣ ΙΦΙΑΝΑΣΣΗΣ
ΤΕΡΠΝΟΝ ΑΠΟΣΤΙΛΒΟΝ ΠΕΡΙΚΑΛΛΕΑ ΠΑΝΤΟΘΕΝ ΑΙΓΛΗΝ

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ Δ ΕΚΑΤΕΡΩΘΕΝ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩ ΕΣΤΑΤΟΝ ΑΜΦΩ
ΩΝ ΡΩΜΗΣ ΒΩΛΑΞ ΙΕΡΗΝ ΚΟΝΙΝ ΑΜΦΗΚΑΛΥΠΤΕΙ
ΖΩΟΙΣ ΕΝ ΘΑΛΙΗΣΙΙ ΧΡΟΝΩΝ ΕΠ ΑΠΕΙΡΟΝΑ ΚΥΚΛΑ
Ω ΠΟΛΥΑΙΝΕ ΛΕΟΝ ΠΡΩΤΟΣΠΑΘΑΡΙΕ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΕ
ΓΗΘΟΜΕΝΟΣ ΚΤΕΑΤΕΣΣΙ ΚΑΙ ΕΝ ΤΕΚΕΕΣΣΙΝ ΑΡΙΣΤΟΙΣ
ΧΩΡΟΝ ΕΠΙΚΡΑΤΕΩΝ ΤΕ ΠΑΛΑΙΦΑΤΟΥ ΟΡΧΟΜΕΝΟΙΟ †

Οὐ φθόνος οὐδὲ χρόνος περιμήκετος ἔργα καλύψει
σῶν καμάτων, πανάριστε, βυθῷ πολυχανδεῖ λήθης·
ἔργα ἐπεὶ βοόωσι καὶ οὐ λαλέοντά περ ἔμπης.
Καὶ τόδε γὰρ τέμενος παναοίδιμον ἐξετέλεσας
μητρὸς ἀπειρογάμου θεοδέγμονος ἰφιανάσσης
τερπνόν, ἀποστίλβον περικαλλέα πάντοθεν αἴγλην,
Χριστοῦ δ'ἑκατέρωθεν ἀποστόλω ἕστατον ἄμφω
ὧν Ῥώμης βῶλαξ ἱερὴν κόνιν ἀμφικαλύπτει.
Ζῴοις ἐν θαλίῃσι χρόνων ἐπ'ἀπείρονα κύκλα,
ὦ πολύαινε Λέον πρωτοσπαθάριε μέγιστε,
γηθόμενος κτεάτεσσι καὶ ἐν τεκέεσσιν ἀρίστοις
χῶρον ἐπικρατέων τε παλαιφάτου Ὀρχομενοῖο.

Traduction : Ni l'envie, ni le temps prolongé ne cacheront les résultats de ton travail au vaste fond de l'oubli, ô le meilleur des hommes ; car tes travaux rugissent, même s'ils ne parlent pas. Tu as accompli cette église chantée de tous de la Mère Pantanassa qui reçut Dieu en elle-même sans connaître le mariage ; une église agréable, luisant, brillant de partout de la plus belle lumière ; de part et d'autre se tiennent les deux apôtres du Christ, dont la sainte poussière est recouverte par la terre de Rome. Ô Léon, grand protospathaire, couvert de louanges, puisses-tu vivre de longues années dans l'abondance, jouissant de tes terres et de tes excellents troupeaux[10], tout en contrôlant le territoire du légendaire Orchoménos.

Cette inscription est d'une correction tout à fait remarquable : elle ne comporte qu'une seule faute d'orthographe (0,57 % des syllabes susceptibles de contenir une faute) ; de plus, elle est écrite en dialecte homérique et respecte les règles de la métrique. Il est évident que nous avons là l'œuvre d'un savant de haut niveau, qui n'a rien à voir avec ceux qui ont rédigé et gravé les trois autres inscriptions. Celle-ci parle de la dédicace de la nef principale à la Vierge, qui est en outre qualifiée d'ἰφιάνασσα, ce qui me semblerait être l'équivalent homérique de παντάνασσα.

Les inscriptions nous apprennent que l'église de Skripou a été construite en l'an du monde 6382, c'est-à-dire en 873/874, alors que sur le trône de Byzance régnaient les empereurs Basile I^er (867-886), avec ses fils Constantin (870-879) et Léon VI (870-912) pendant le second patriarcat d'Ignace (867-877).

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[10] Le mot τέκος (datif pluriel homérique τεκέεσσιν) signifie l'enfant aussi bien que le jeune animal. Dans le contexte de l'inscription, je préfère comprendre « animaux » plutôt qu' « enfants », car le poème ne mentionne pas l'épouse de Léon, citée avec les enfants dans la première inscription. Mais il faut reconnaître que la traduction « jouissant de tes terres et de tes excellents enfants » reste possible.

Il n'est pas sûr que les trois églises soient des constructions entièrement nouvelles. Sur l'inscription de l'abside centrale, le verbe ἀνίστημι est utilisé à propos de l'église de la Vierge ; or, ce verbe évoque la résurrection et pourrait facilement être compris comme désignant la reconstruction d'une église préexistante plutôt que la fondation d'une église nouvelle. Une telle hypothèse trouverait appui dans l'emploi du verbe ἐκτελῶ, accomplir, dans l'inscription héroïque. Par contre, le verbe καλλιεργῶ, utilisé dans les inscriptions des deux chapelles latérales, signifie « bien faire » ou « décorer », et est normalement utilisé pour des constructions nouvelles.

Skripou est une église en croix grecque de construction lourde. La nef centrale et les bras de la croix se distinguent du reste de la construction parce qu'ils sont très élevés. Les deux nefs latérales sont beaucoup plus basses que celle du centre ; le narthex, plus bas que la nef centrale, mais plus haut que les nefs latérales, donne l'impression d'avoir été ajouté après coup. En fait, il n'en est rien : les inscriptions qui sont encastrées dans les murs des trois nefs et du narthex démontrent que toutes ces constructions sont contemporaines et datent de la construction de l'église par Léon en 873/874. Mais il est évidemment impossible de savoir ce qui existait à cet endroit avant la construction de l'église actuelle. A. H. S. Megaw parle d'une basilique, dont les colonnes auraient été réutilisées au *templon* de Skripou[11]. Il n'en dit pas plus. D'autres parlent d'une basilique paléochrétienne, sur les ruines de laquelle aurait été construite l'église actuelle[12]. Rien n'est certain. Skripou est cependant une église curieuse, avec une extrême lourdeur de construction et des murs particulièrement massifs, tant les murs extérieurs que les murs intérieurs constituant les absides et séparant les nefs. On peut donc légitimement se demander si ces particularités architecturales ne seraient pas les séquelles d'une construction par étapes, pendant laquelle des murs extérieurs seraient devenus de simples séparations entre la nef principale et les collatéraux. Il appartient aux archéologues d'apprécier la validité de cette hypothèse. Quoi qu'il en soit, ces étapes seraient toutes antérieurs à l'intervention du protospathaire Léon, qui sera maintenant au centre de notre curiosité.

LE FONDATEUR ET SES TITRES

Le fondateur était un certain Léon qui portait les titres de protospathaire *épi tôn oikeiakôn*. Il était marié et avait quelques enfants. Par l'inscription métrique nous apprenons qu'il possédait des terres et des troupeaux importants dans la région d'Orchoménos, c'est-à-dire de Skripou, et qu'il y exerçait une certaine autorité; mais rien ne précise si cette autorité découlait d'une position administrative, ou tout simplement de sa haute position sociale. Ce qui est certain, c'est qu'aucune charge administrative n'est mentionnée dans les inscriptions. N. Bees avait supposé que Léon aurait pu être un stratège de l'Hellade[13], hypothèse qui a été reprise par plusieurs savants[14] mais n'est fondée sur rien et a été rejetée avec raison par A. H. S. Megaw[15]. Celui-ci s'est tourné vers la signification du terme *épi tôn oikeiakôn*, et a conclu que Léon était un fonctionnaire de haut rang (« senior official ») au service des domaines impériaux (« steward of the imperial domain »). En effet, à partir du XIe siècle, un haut fonctionnaire des finances impériales porta le titre *épi tôn oikeiakôn*. Mais cela est vrai pour le XIe siècle et plus tard, non au IXe.

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[11] MEGAW (cité n. 1), p. 4.

[12] KODER-HILD (cités n. 4), p. 227-228.

[13] N. BEES, « Zur Sigillographie der byzantinischen Themen Peloponnes und Hellas », *VV* 21, 1915, 3^e partie, p. 203.

Reprenons la question de la titulature depuis le début.

La dignité de protospathaire était une dignité honorifique (ἀξία διὰ βραβείου) fort importante en cette deuxième moitié du IXe siècle : le protospathaire portait la plus élevée des dignités dites « impériales », c'est-à-dire des dignités qui découlaient de charges au service personnel de l'empereur. La collation du protospatharat entraînait souvent le versement par l'intéressé à l'état d'une somme importante, 12 à 18 livres d'or (864-1296 *nomismata*), et lui assurait un traitement annuel fixe d'une livre d'or (72 *nomismata*)[16]. Il s'agissait initialement de gardes du corps du souverain : encore dans le cérémonial des IXe et Xe siècles, on voit les protospathaires, armés de hallebardes (σπαθοβάκλια), monter une garde honorifique autour du basileus. Les protospathaires devenaient automatiquement membres du sénat. Ils étaient souvent mentionnés avec des qualificatifs d'honneur, tels ἐνδοξότατος, εὐκλεής, μεγαλοπρεπής, περιφανής, et plus souvent πανεύφημος, comme sur nos deux inscriptions des chapelles latérales; cette même expression, πανεύφημος πρωτοσπαθάριος, se retrouve dans un document presque contemporain, les actes du concile de 879[17]. Au IXe siècle, une bonne partie des plus hauts fonctionnaires et officiers byzantins, tels les stratèges des thèmes ou les logothètes, n'avaient pas de dignité honorifique supérieure à celle du protospathaire : c'est ce que montrent les nombreux sceaux de la période. Bref, pour une bourgade provinciale comme Skripou, un protospathaire, même sans position administrative, était au IXe siècle un très grand seigneur.

L'interprétation du titre *épi tôn oikeiakôn* est plus délicate, parce que cette expression a été utilisée plus tard, au XIe siècle, pour désigner un service des finances, le *sékréton* financier des *épi tôn oikeiakôn*, attesté pour la première fois en 1030 et dont la création pourrait être l'œuvre de Basile II. Ce service n'a rien à voir avec notre propos et devra être ignoré dans ce qui suit[18]. Nous tâcherons de préciser ce que ce terme pouvait bien signifier dans la deuxième moitié du IXe siècle.

L'expression ἐπὶ τῶν οἰκειακῶν sous-entend un terme complémentaire, soit ἀνθρώπων, soit κτημάτων. Aux IXe et Xe siècles, l'expression apparaît sur un très grand nombre de bulles de plomb et d'inscriptions, et accompagne les dignités de protospathaire[19], primicier et ostiaire[20], spatharocandidat[21], cubiculaire[22], spathaire[23] et strator[24]. Ici, le terme complémentaire ne peut être que ἀνθρώπων, d'autant plus que l'expression est l'équivalent de οἰκειακοί[25]. Ces *oikeiakoi* sont souvent mentionnés dans les *taktika* et dans le cérémonial. Le *taktikon* Uspenskij (842-843) connaît les *oikeiakoi prôtospatharioi, spatharokandidatoi* et *spatharioi* ainsi que les simples *oikeiakoi*, sans dignité[26]. Ils constituent des groupes bien définis, qui se rencontrent à un niveau moyen de la hiérarchie. Ils se retrouvent aussi dans le traité de Philothée, tantôt comme *oikeiakoi* (protospathaires, spatharocandidats)[27] tantôt comme *oikeiakoi tou Lausiakou* (spathaires, stratores)[28], tantôt comme *basilikoi* (protospathaires)[29] qui sont aussi appelés *basilikoi tou Lausiakou* et sont identiques aux *oikeiakoi tou Lausiakou*[30]. Du texte de Philothée (899), il ressort clairement que ces archontes du Lausiakos constituaient la catégorie principale de chaque rang de dignitaires, ceux qui n'avaient pas obtenu de dignité supplémentaire; ils étaient ainsi appelés λιτοί par opposition à une autre catégorie, ceux appelés ἐπὶ τοῦ Χρυσοτρικλίνου, groupe de protospathaires légèrement supérieurs en rang.

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[14] SOTÈRIOU (citée n. 1), p. 157; ORLANDOS, *BCH* 70, 1946, p. 424; A. GRABAR, *Sculptures byzantines de Constantinople (IVe-Xe s.)*, Paris 1963, p. 90.

[15] MEGAW (cité n. 1), p. 23-25. Il a aussi rejeté avec raison tout rapprochement de notre Léon avec des homonymes qui apparaissent sur des sceaux avec des titres et attributions différents du nôtre.

[16] P. LEMERLE, « Roga et rente d'État », *RÉB* 25, 1967, p. 78-83.

[17] MANSI XVII, col. 396 A.

[18] N. OIKONOMIDÈS, « L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XIe siècle (1025-1118) », *TM* 6, 1976, p. 136. V. LAURENT, *La collection Orghidan*, Paris 1952, n° 15, et *Les sceaux byzantins du médailler Vatican*, Vatican 1962, n° 6, a supposé qu'il pourrait s'agir là de fonctionnaires subalternes du bureau central de l'*épi tôn oikeiakôn*, mais c'est impossible à admettre étant donné que les inscriptions de Skripou sont d'un siècle et demi antérieures à l'apparition du grand bureau de l'*épi tôn oikeiakôn*.

Les *prôtospatharioi kai loipoi oikeiakoi* (ou *épi tôn oikeiakôn*[31]) accompagnent l'empereur lors de certaines cérémonies[32].

Le terme οἰκειακός est en fait la traduction du latin *domesticus*[33]; la définition du terme par un juriste est fournie dans le code de loi connu comme *Épanagôgè*, que l'on devrait maintenant, grâce aux recherches du D^{r} Schminck, appeler *Eisagôgè*, et qui fut publié justement à l'époque qui nous intéresse, entre 879 et 886 : « sont appelés *oikeiakoi* ceux qui sont libres, mais résident et sont nourris dans la maison du seigneur qui les possède »[34]. Il s'agit donc des membres de la domesticité, en l'occurence de la domesticité impériale, dont le personnel, inscrit probablement à l'οἰκειακὸν σκρίνιον[35], gagne en importance dès la fin du VII^e siècle[36]. On peut donc imaginer qu'initialement certains gardes de l'empereur, spathaires, protospathaires etc., étaient plus particulièrement attachés à sa domesticité, se distinguant ainsi du reste de leurs collègues.

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[19] Extrêmement courant : G. SCHLUMBERGER, *Sigillographie de l'Empire byzantin*, Paris 1884, p. 301, 381, 449, 451, 556, 657, et plusieurs autres publications.

[20] SCHLUMBERGER (cité n. 19), p. 138, 560.

[21] SCHLUMBERGER (cité n. 19), p. 180, 283, 290, 556, 559; K. KONSTANTOPOULOS, *Βυζαντιακὰ μολυβδόβουλλα τοῦ ἐν Ἀθήναις Νομισματικοῦ Μουσείου*, Athènes 1917, n^{os} 442, 206 a, 437 g; B. PANČENKO, *Katalog Molivdovullov* (*IRAIK* 1903, 1904, 1908), n^{os} 488, 471.

[22] SCHLUMBERGER (cité n. 19), p. 558.

[23] SCHLUMBERGER (cité n. 19), p. 556, 557; KONSTANTOPOULOS (cité n. 21), n^{os} 437, 438, 533 e, 565 a; J. ÉBERSOLT, *Sceaux byzantins du musée de Constantinople* (extrait de la *Revue Numismatique* de 1914), n^{o} 326; W. DE GRAY BIRCH, *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, n^{o} 17816; *Byz.* 5, 1929/1930, p. 615.

[24] KONSTANTOPOULOS (cité n. 21), n^{o} 437 a.

[25] Sc. ἄνθρωποι : CONSTANTIN PORPHYROGÉNÈTE, *De cerimoniis*, Bonn, p. 179.

[26] N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX^{e} et X^{e} siècles*, Paris 1972, p. 51, l. 27; 53, l. 24; 57, l. 22; 63, l. 10.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 171, l. 15 et 18; 149, l. 17 et 20.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 151, l. 28; 155, l. 24.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 147, l. 23.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 227, l. 25, 28, 30; cf. p. 227, l. 16.

[31] *De cerimoniis*, Bonn, p. 179.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 70, 72, 152, 174, 542, 576, 604.

[33] DU CANGE, s. v.

[34] ZÉPOS II, p. 362 (§ 40, 42) : οἰκειακοὶ δὲ καλοῦνται ἐκεῖνοι, οἵτινες ἐλεύθεροι μέν εἰσιν, ἐν δὲ τῇ τοῦ ἔχοντος αὐτοὺς οἰκίᾳ διατρέφονταί τε καὶ καταμένουσιν. Dans les lignes qui précèdent, le législateur parle des peines que subiront les esclaves ou les *oikeiakoi* s'ils lancent de fausses accusations contre leur seigneur.

Au milieu du IX^e siècle, les *oikeiakoi* constituaient la classe principale des titulaires palatins de dignités honorifiques, familiers de l'empereur; au cours de la deuxième moitié de ce siècle, à leur dénomination s'ajoute la précision τοῦ Λαυσιακοῦ : c'était le nom d'une galerie située au centre du grand palais, construite par Justinien II et richement décorée. Elle se trouvait dans le voisinage de la grande salle du trône qu'était le Chrysotriklinos[37]. Les *oikeiakoi* constituaient en quelque sorte la garde honorifique du Lausiakos, de la même façon que les *épi tou Chrysotriklinou* constituaient la garde honorifique de la salle du trône.

Pour mieux clarifier les choses, il faut rappeler ici l'anecdote de Kténas, ce vieux et riche clerc, chantre (*domestikos*) de la Néa qui, autour de 907/908 — donc à une époque assez proche de notre inscription — désirait « devenir protospathaire, ... participer aux processions du Lausiakos, occuper [dans l'ordre des préséances] une place de protospathaire et recevoir un traitement d'une livre » (... γενέσθαι πρωτοσπαθάριον... καὶ προέρχεσθαι εἰς τὸν Λαυσιακὸν καὶ καθέζεσθαι ὡς πρωτοσπαθάριον καὶ ῥογεύεσθαι αὐτὸν λίτραν μίαν...)[38]... Autrement dit, pour les *oikeiakoi*, le Lausiakos était l'endroit où ils participaient activement aux cérémonies du palais. Et, ce qui est important pour notre propos, les *oikeiakoi* résidaient en principe à Constantinople, à moins qu'ils n'aient reçu un mandat administratif à exercer en province. En temps normal, ils étaient de vrais serviteurs de l'empereur, se rendant quotidiennement au Lausiakos, un endroit à l'intérieur du palais : un lieu de rencontre des pairs, une sorte de club; ils étaient des personnages de marque, à distinguer des protospathaires non liés au service personnel de l'empereur.

En effet, dans les listes de préséance il est fait spécialement mention des dignitaires qui ne sont pas liés au service palatin, et qui ne participent pas aux cérémonies[39]. Dans le *taktikon* Uspenskij, les protospathaires et les spatharocandidats *oikeiakoi* sont nettement distingués de la catégorie inférieure des ἐξωτικοί, terme qui est expliqué par la phrase ἔξω τῆς προελεύσεως, « qui ne participent pas aux processions »[40]. En fait ἐξωτικός signifie « celui qui n'habite pas la capitale »[41]. Ainsi, dans le texte plus sophistiqué de Philothée la distinction est affinée : à la fin de chaque groupe de dignitaires du même rang, on trouve mention des dignitaires διὰ πόλεως et des dignitaires ἐξωτικοί[42]. Les dignitaires διὰ πόλεως, c'est-à-dire habitant Constantinople, ne participaient pas aux cérémonies du palais, mais sont mentionnés lorsque le souverain sort en ville[43] et lors des distributions de l'*hypateia*[44]. Les ἐξωτικοί, dignitaires habitant les provinces, ne participent à rien de tout cela.

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[35] Cf. *Basiliques* VI, 1, 61 et 72.

[36] Cf. THÉOPHANE, éd. de Boor p. 373, 385, 400, 455, 461.

[37] R. JANIN, *Constantinople byzantine*, 2^e éd., Paris 1964, p. 115; R. GUILLAND, *Études de topographie de Constantinople byzantine*, I, Berlin-Amsterdam 1969, p. 154-160, 162-164.

[38] CONSTANTIN PORPHYROGÉNÈTE, *De administrando imperio*, éd. Moravcsik-Jenkins, Dumbarton Oaks 1967, chap. 50, l. 235 s.

[39] OIKONOMIDÈS (cité n. 26), p. 299.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 51, l. 30; 55, l. 15.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 61, l. 27 : higoumènes *exotikoi* = de province.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 147, l. 25-26; 151, l. 12-13, cf. note 115; 155, l. 8-9; 233, l. 14-15.

Retournons à l'église de Skripou. Son fondateur était un homme de marque. Il avait une dignité honorifique très élevée, en fait du même niveau que celle du stratège du thème de l'Hellade; mais aussi, il appartenait à l'élite des protospathaires du Lausiakos, de la domesticité de l'empereur : il habitait Constantinople, fréquentait le palais, avait des contacts personnels avec le souverain, recevait de sa main chaque année son traitement d'une livre. Les mots *épi tôn oikeiakôn* sur les inscriptions étaient là pour éviter toute confusion malencontreuse avec d'autres protospathaires de second rang, comme les *exotikoi* qui auraient pu exister vers la fin du IX^e^ siècle dans le thème de l'Hellade.

Il n'occupait pas de poste administratif au moment où il a fondé l'église. Il n'en avait pas besoin. Skripou était sans doute son *proasteion*, son domaine, qu'il « contrôlait » en exerçant ses droits de propriétaire : il avait des terres, il avait des troupeaux, il avait sans doute des paysans qui travaillaient pour lui. C'était un grand propriétaire foncier, comme ceux dont les sources nous parlent surtout dans l'Asie Mineure du X^e^ siècle, un riche paysan qui avait fait carrière avec succès à la capitale et revenait maintenant construire — ou reconstruire — l'église du village où se trouvait sa base économique, une grande église, comme il convient au village du seigneur qui avait fait fortune à la capitale, une église de domaine à l'usage des seigneurs (lorsqu'ils étaient là), des autorités locales (s'il y en avait), aussi bien de la paysannerie — à moins qu'elle n'ait été, dès le début, une église conventuelle; mais rien ne permet d'affirmer une chose de pareil pour l'année 873/874.

LE MESSAGE DES INSCRIPTIONS

La nouvelle église apportait aussi des messages de la capitale; ils apparaissent de façon assez subtile.

1. Les trois inscriptions du côté oriental du bâtiment, toutes avec des lettres gravées en relief sur des pierres locales, sont rédigées dans un grec du IX^e^ siècle sans prétention et comportent de très nombreuses fautes d'orthographe. On peut supposer que le graveur était, comme tous les constructeurs de Skripou, recruté sur place : un graveur habile, comme le montre la qualité des lettres et des dessins qui les accompagnent ainsi que les autres décorations en sculpture de l'église, qui sont sans doute aussi son œuvre. Il savait probablement lire et écrire lui-même, puisqu'il n'a pas gravé de lettre de forme aberrante et puisqu'il a été capable d'éviter ce genre d'erreur tout en utilisant quelques ligatures — qui naturellement n'apparaissaient pas sur le modèle qu'on lui aurait donné, si modèle il y eut. On peut imaginer qu'un tel artisan avait quelque rapport avec le centre urbain de la région, Thèbes, archevêché et siège du stratège de l'Hellade. Il a pu recevoir ses instructions concernant les inscrip-

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[43] *De cerimoniis*, Bonn, p. 302.

[44] OIKONOMIDÈS (cité n. 26), p. 229.

tions de Léon lui-même ou de son représentant dans la région, du *kouratôr* du domaine ou du prêtre du village, etc.

Les trois inscriptions du côté oriental du bâtiment reflètent un milieu paysan, ou tout au moins agricole riche, ayant le goût de la décoration visuelle, mais incapable de faire face aux difficultés du grec écrit : les lettres des trois inscriptions sont belles, grandes et très lisibles, mais les problèmes orthographiques ne semblent pas avoir préoccupé le graveur. Ses lecteurs n'étaient probablement pas en mesure d'apprécier les délices de la correction orthographique. C'était le public de la Béotie du Nord, dont la capitale était Thèbes, ville administrative à caractère très agricole en ce IXᵉ siècle, dans laquelle la monnaie impériale circulait peu[45]. Dans ce public, il y avait sans doute des lettrés, des administrateurs du thème, des ecclésiastiques, ou même de simples citoyens qui avaient eu l'occasion d'étudier pour quelque temps à l'école primaire du grammatiste; ils étaient tous capables de lire et de comprendre le message des trois inscriptions de la partie orientale du bâtiment; mais peu nombreux étaient parmi eux ceux qui auraient protesté pour les fautes d'orthographe.

La quatrième inscription, celle qui est encastrée sur la façade Ouest du narthex, est tout à fait autre chose. Elle est inscrite sur une pierre différente des autres inscriptions, qui ne se retrouve pas ailleurs dans le bâtiment. Nous en avons fait examiner un spécimen au laboratoire d'archéométrie du centre de recherches Dimokritos, à Athènes, et cet examen a confirmé certains résultats de l'observation visuelle; ce marbre est nettement différent de toutes les autres pierres utilisées pour la construction de l'église et ne peut certainement pas provenir de la carrière locale de Lèbadeia, bien connue depuis l'antiquité[46]. Donc, bien qu'il s'agisse d'un bloc de dimensions considérables et d'un poids analogue, nous pouvons dire avec certitude qu'il fut amené à Skripou de loin. En plus, l'inscription qui s'y trouve gravée tranche nettement sur les autres : les lettres sont gravées en creux, et non point en relief; elles sont beaucoup plus petites et beaucoup moins décorées. Elle est rédigée à la deuxième personne, comme si son auteur parlait à Léon et faisait l'éloge de son œuvre. Le texte est en langue homérique correcte et en hexamètres corrects, l'orthographe presque impeccable. Cette inscription vient d'un tout autre monde mais elle a abouti au mur du même édifice.

Il est absolument impossible de penser que son auteur et son graveur appartenaient au milieu local. On ne peut pas non plus l'attribuer au personnel administratif ou ecclésiastique de Thèbes au IXᵉ siècle : des vers héroïques de cette qualité et de cette correction linguistique et métrique ne peuvent pas être l'œuvre d'un secrétaire quelconque ou d'un grammatiste. Leur origine doit être cherchée plus loin, dans un centre de plus haute culture. En Grèce du Sud, on ne pourrait penser qu'à Corinthe, capitale du thème du Péloponnèse, centre économique et culturel le plus important de la région aux IX^e/X^e siècles, avec une circulation monétaire intense et des contacts directs avec la capitale. Grâce à la *Vie de saint Luc*, nous savons qu'au début du X^e siècle, elle comptait parmi ses habitants un certain Théophylaktos, fameux professeur de littérature classique, comme ceux qui vivaient surtout à Constantinople[47]. Il aurait fallu un tel homme pour faire l'épigramme de Skripou.

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[45] Cf. N. OIKONOMIDÈS, « The first century of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas », *DOP* 46, 1992, p. 252, 253.

[46] Je suis reconnaissant au directeur du laboratoire d'Archéométrie de Dimokritos, Monsieur Yannis Maniatis, et à sa collaboratrice Kiki Polykréti, qui ont procédé à l'examen scientifique de ce bloc de marbre et aux comparaisons nécessaires avec les autres pierres utilisés dans l'église et avec la banque de données de leur laboratoire concernant les marbres et les pierres disponibles du bassin oriental de la Méditerranée. Leur opinion est la suivante : « This is a low grade metamorphic marble. The local Levadeia ancient quarry can be excluded, because of different ESR parameters. The anatolian quarries, such as Marmara, Aphrodisias, Dolimion etc., must be excluded because they produce good quality well-crystallised marble. The area around Corinth is also excluded because there is not marble but only limestone. The general Boeotia area cannot be excluded at the moment. »

Corinthe serait l'endroit le plus proche où l'on pourrait raisonnablement chercher le rédacteur de l'inscription métrique. Mais dans sa région on ne trouve point de marbre de cette qualité. Un autre endroit possible serait naturellement Constantinople elle-même, où il y avait plus d'un spécialiste qualifié et où se trouvait la résidence principale du fondateur de l'église. L'hypothèse la plus vraisemblable est, à mon avis, que l'inscription héroïque de la façade occidentale de Skripou a été composée à Constantinople. En tout cas, elle a été certainement gravée dans un grand centre de culture, peut-être dans la capitale byzantine; ensuite le bloc de pierre fut transporté à Skripou pour être encastré dans le mur occidental. Une pierre envoyée de loin, peut-être même de la capitale, ne pouvait qu'avoir aux yeux des paysans du lieu des qualités bien plus admirables qu'une simple inscription locale. Cela expliquerait pourquoi la pierre est différente, le graveur différent, l'écriture différente et, surtout, moins décorée.

On peut même se poser encore une question, compte tenu du fait — qui n'est, il faut l'avouer, pas unique — que l'auteur de l'inscription s'adresse à Léon à la deuxième personne; on peut se demander si l'épigramme n'aurait pas pû être un cadeau fait à Léon, cadeau d'un ami sans doute haut placé. S'il en était ainsi, la pierre aurait une valeur symbolique — une valeur « sociale » — accrue, car un tel détail ne serait naturellement pas resté un secret.

Il me semble évident que les Béotiens du Nord qui visitaient Skripou pouvaient à peine déchiffrer les petites lettres de l'inscription en vers héroïques, encore moins scander ces vers ou les traduire dans leur parler. Devant elle, ils se trouvaient confrontés à cette culture de classe qui venait de la capitale et était fondée sur l'acquisition d'un langage d'initiés et l'imitation de modèles antiques[48]. L'inscription en vers héroïques de Skripou contenait beaucoup de renseignements concernant l'église et son fondateur, mais dans une forme linguistique peu accessible. Il ne restait à ses lecteurs locaux qu'à faire confiance à la pierre venue de loin, d'un haut lieu de la société, et à admirer les contacts que le fondateur de l'église avait avec des cercles comme il n'en existait pas dans la région. Pour les renseignements, ils n'avaient qu'à se tourner vers les inscriptions du côté oriental, bien plus lisibles et parfaitement compréhensibles pour tous. Si jamais un initié (ou, bien plus tard, un archéologue) passait par Skripou, il pourrait prendre le temps nécessaire pour déchiffrer l'inscription occidentale et pour comprendre son contenu.

Bref, à mes yeux, l'inscription en vers héroïques de Skripou était délibérément conçue et exécutée pour impressionner par sa présence plutôt que par son sens : on a dû lui attribuer un rôle quasi magique. Ce n'est pas un hasard si ce bloc de marbre fut placé au coin du mur près de l'entrée, comme un ἀκρογωνιαῖος λίθος.

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[47] OIKONOMIDÈS (cité n. 45), p. 254.

[48] P. LEMERLE, *Le premier humanisme byzantin*, Paris 1971, p. 254-255.

Le premier message des inscriptions vient donc compléter l'image donnée par la construction même de l'église : la civilisation constantinopolitaine arrivait à Skripou non seulement sous la forme d'une construction subventionnée, mais aussi avec l'importation de la seconde culture, la culture antiquisante, qui caractérise le « premier humanisme byzantin ».

2. Le second message sur lequel je voudrais insister est en rapport avec la politique, ou plutôt la politique ecclésiastique. Léon mentionne dans ses inscriptions toutes les autorités de Constantinople, y compris le patriarche Ignace, qui est nommé sur l'inscription de la chapelle latérale de Saint-Pierre. Mais on constate aussi que Léon semble montrer un certain attachement envers Rome : il dédie les deux chapelles latérales à saint Pierre et à saint Paul, deux Romains par excellence, et souligne dans l'inscription héroïque que ces deux apôtres honorés à Skripou sont ceux « dont la sainte poussière est recouverte par la terre de Rome ».

On a montré que le culte de saint Pierre était assez développé à Byzance, le plus souvent associé à celui de saint Paul, comme dans l'église que nous étudions[49]. Plusieurs auteurs, notamment Théodore Stoudite et même Photius (dans un effort, il est vrai, pour restaurer ses rapports avec Rome), ont parlé de son rôle particulier parmi les apôtres et du fait que le Christ l'avait qualifié de « pierre » sur laquelle l'Église serait construite. Certains allaient même plus loin en reconnaissant au pape de Rome la succession apostolique, et parmi eux se trouvait le patriarche Ignace, dans l'atmosphère passionnée de la querelle photienne.

Les événements sont bien connus et ne seront rappelés ici que de façon sommaire. Ignace avait occupé le trône patriarcal de 847 à 858, mais avait été déposé par le César Bardas pour être remplacé par Photius. L'Église byzantine se divisa, lorsque Photius, rejeté par Rome mais encore appuyé par les autorités de Constantinople, procéda à la convocation du concile de 867, qui devait excommunier le pape Nicolas I^er^ et provoquer ainsi le schisme dit « photien ». Mais le régime changea à Constantinople avec l'assassinat du César Bardas et de l'empereur Michel III : Basile I^er^, resté seul au pouvoir, renvoya Photius et réintégra Ignace (867). Le concile de 869-870 prononça l'excommunication contre Photius et essaya de renouer avec l'Église romaine — sans trop de succès, il faut bien le dire. À Constantinople en tout cas, il y eut un effort délibéré pour rétablir des bons rapports permanents avec Rome, tant de la part du patriarche Ignace que de la part de l'empereur Basile I^er^. Le peuple et surtout le clergé restaient divisés entre partisans d'Ignace et partisans de Photius. Dans ce contexte, Ignace, qui avait été jusqu'alors le favori de Rome, s'adressait au pape en des termes qui le mettaient à deux pas de la reconnaissance inconditionnelle de la primauté romaine : « Au très heureux président et patriarche de tous les trônes, au successeur du coryphée (des apôtres), au pape œcuménique Nicolas », écrivait-il[50]. On notera la référence explicite à saint Pierre comme origine des pouvoirs exceptionnels du pape, de ce même pape qui avait été excommunié par son prédécesseur.

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[49] Voir en dernier lieu Vera VON FALKENHAUSEN, « San Pietro nella Religiosità Bizantina », dans *Bisanzio, Roma e l'Italia nell'Alto Medioevo*, Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo 34/2, Spoleto 1988, II, p. 627-674 (avec la bibliographie antérieure).

[50] PG 105, col. 856.

Comme l'a déjà souligné Vera von Falkenhausen, il y a d'autres textes qui soulignent encore mieux « le rôle de protagoniste que saint Pierre aurait joué dans la querelle entre les deux patriarches », notamment un récit plein d'un symbolisme explicite, contenu dans la *Vie d'Ignace* et repris dans la Chronique de Skylitzès[51]. Le César Bardas, qui avait appuyé Photius contre Ignace, aurait fait un rêve prémonitoire : il se serait vu entrer à Sainte-Sophie en compagnie de l'empereur Michel III ; il aurait reconnu saint Pierre lui-même occupant à ce moment le trône du patriarche et entouré d'eunuques ; l'ex-patriarche Ignace (nous sommes donc avant 867), était agenouillé devant lui, lui demandant justice pour ce qu'il avait subi (c'est-à-dire pour sa déposition de 858) à cause du César ; saint Pierre aurait alors donné un poignard à quelqu'un de son entourage en lui demandant de tuer Bardas aussi bien que l'empereur Michel.

Le rêve s'arrête là. Il s'agit, en effet, d'une scène unique et impressionnante : saint Pierre assis sur le trône de Constantinople et ordonnant la mise à mort des ennemis politiques d'Ignace et de Basile le Macédonien. Nous savons d'ailleurs que c'est ce dernier qui arrangea l'assassinat de Bardas aussi bien que celui de Michel III, lui aussi qui restaura Ignace au patriarcat et, par la suite, montra un zèle tout particulier à promouvoir le culte de l'apôtre Pierre à Constantinople en faisant construire de nouvelles églises et en y accueillant de nouvelles reliques, entre autres le poignard avec lequel saint Pierre aurait coupé l'oreille de Malchos au jardin de Gethsémani.

Cette histoire circulait, au IX^e^ siècle, dans l'Empire et impressionnait. Tout le monde la connaissait, sans doute, en 873/874, sept ans après le meurtre de Michel III et la chute de Photius.

Dans ce contexte, la dédicace de l'église de Skripou ne peut pas être vue comme un acte fortuit. Le protospathaire Léon dédia les deux chapelles latérales aux deux apôtres romains et n'oublia point de mentionner le patriarche Ignace sur l'inscription de la chapelle Saint-Pierre ; ainsi adoptait-il probablement une attitude pro-ignatienne — sinon pro-romaine — et certainement une attitude destinée à plaire à l'empereur Basile I^er^. Cette prise de position était expliquée avec plus de paroles (mais moins faciles à comprendre) dans l'inscription en vers héroïques ; celle-ci n'était pas conçue pour être lue par le grand public ; mais il en aurait été tout autrement si un homme éduqué, un Constantinopolitain, passait par Orchoménos.

Conviction personnelle ? Propagande ? Simple arrivisme ? On ne saurait le dire. En tout cas, la fondation de Skripou apportait jusqu'aux rives occidentales des marais du lac Kopais, au cœur de l'Hellade, où la toponymie ancienne était encore vivante, les problèmes et les discussions de la capitale ; elle reflétait en quelque sorte le vent politique qui soufflait alors à Constantinople.

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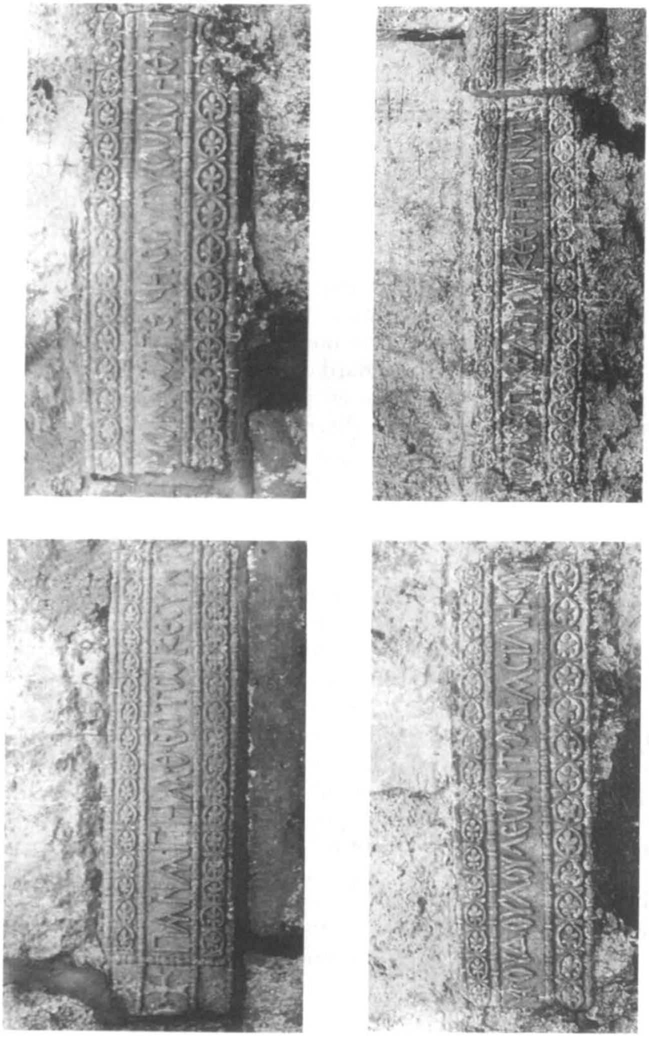
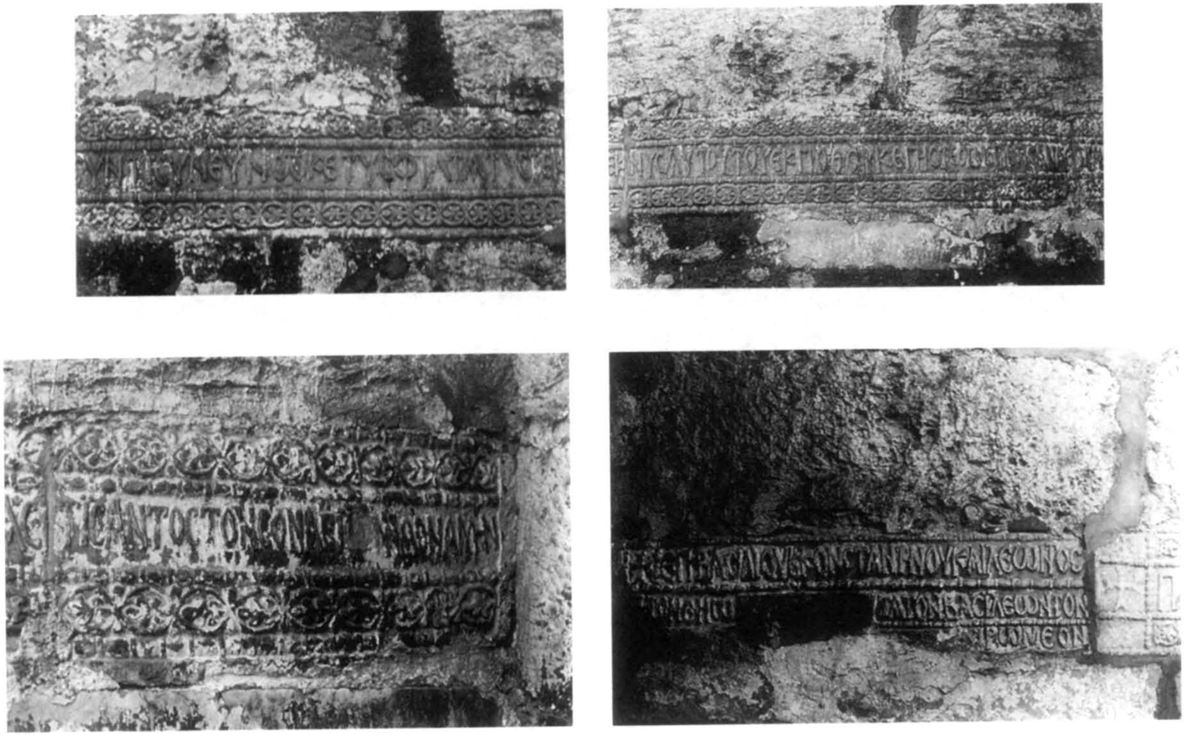
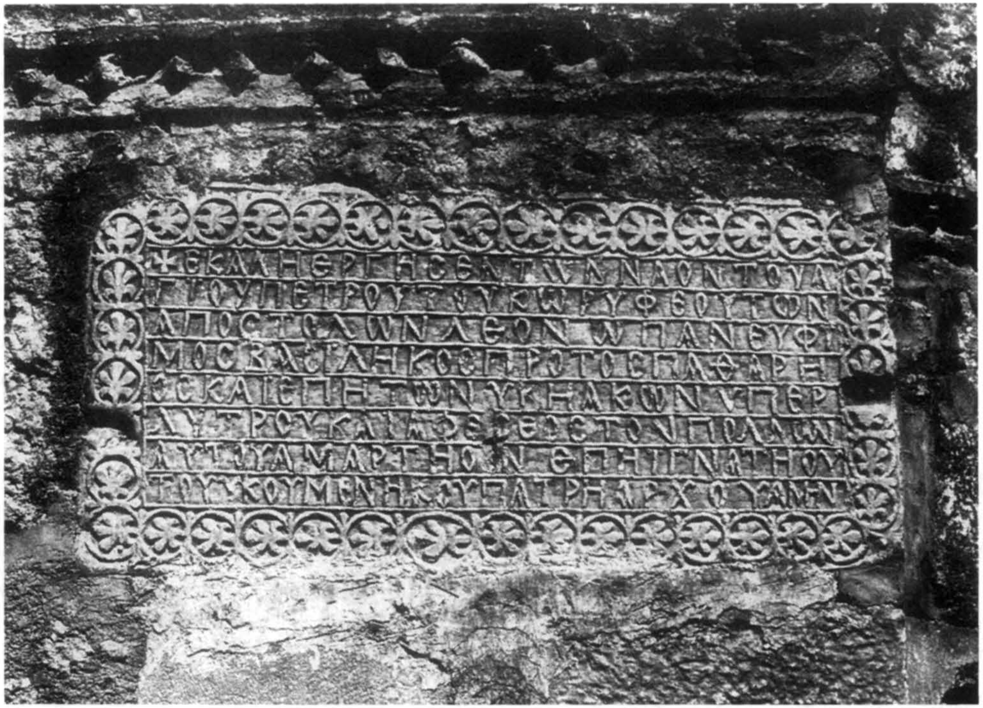
[51] *Ibid.*, col. 533-536 ; SKYLITZÈS, éd. Thurn p. 111.

PL. I





Skripou : inscription nº 1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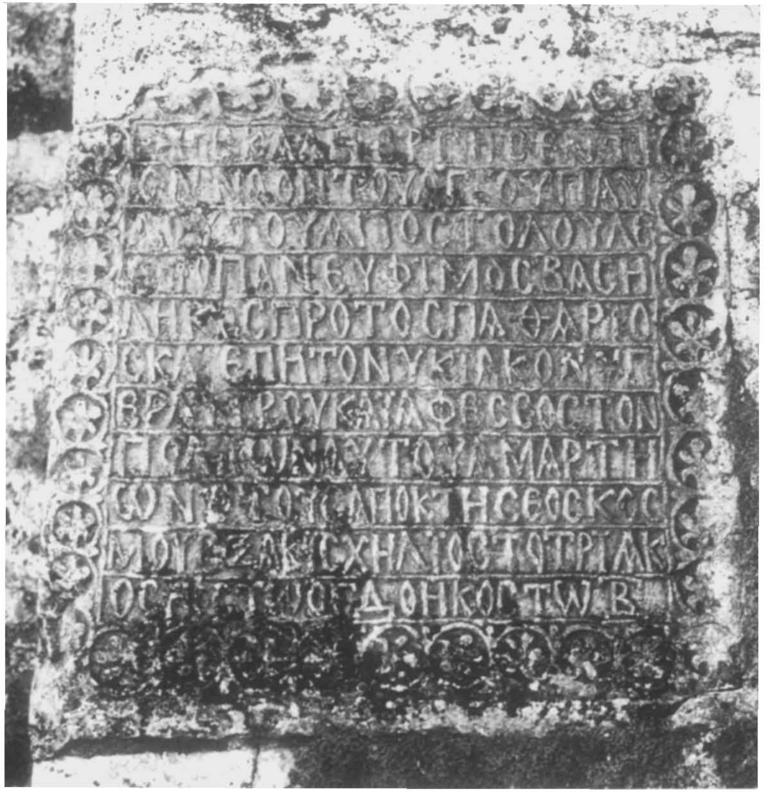
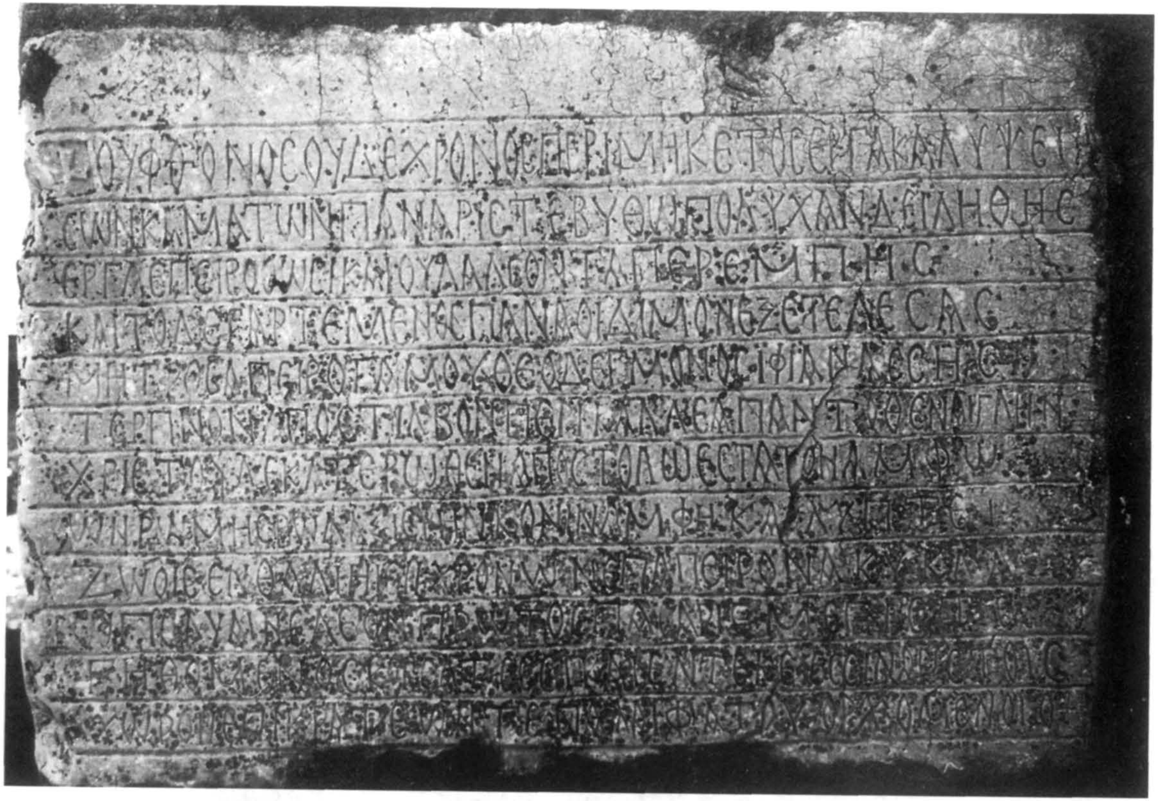
ΛΥΤΡΟΥΚΑΙΑΦΕΣΕΟΣΤΟΝΠΟΛΛΩΝ
ΑΥΤΟΥΑΜΑΡΤΗΟΝΕΠΗΤΙΓΝΑΤΗΟΥ
ΤΟΥΥΚΟΥΜΕΝΗΚΟΥΠΑΤΡΗΑΡΧΟΥΑΜΗΝ

Skripou : inscription n° 2

Pl. III



Skripou : inscription n° 3



Skripou : inscription n° 4

XXVIII

L'épigraphie des bulles de plomb byzantines

Les bulles de plomb sont des plaquettes rondes, d'un diamètre habituel de 1 à 4 centimètres, pas très belles à voir, destinées à sceller la correspondance ou des colis ou à authentifier les actes ouverts, tels les privilèges. Elles étaient fabriquées en utilisant des flans coulés, à l'aide d'un instrument spécial, appelé le boullotèrion. C'était une pince portant sur les surfaces intérieures de ses deux bras les matrices, gravées « en négatif » d'inscriptions ou de figures. Avec cette pince on frappait les flans, qui devenaient ainsi les bulles inscrites et décorées que nous avons aujourd'hui [1].

Je viens de décrire en quelques mots le mode de fabrication et la fonction première de la bulle, le scellement et l'authentification de documents. Pour servir efficacement ce but, la bulle devait en principe permettre d'identifier l'expéditeur de l'acte scellé. En plus, elle devait présenter certaines caractéristiques qui garantiraient son authenticité et décourageraient les éventuelles tentatives de falsification ou d'imitation. D'où la tendance des individus à garder le même type de sceau pendant de longues années, même lorsqu'ils changeaient de poste administratif; souvent on a l'impression qu'un sceau est la copie fidèle de celui qu'il venait remplacer [2].

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[1] Dans ce qui suit, je prendrai mes exemples surtout dans deux publications récentes, munies de beaux albums qui permettent la vérification des lectures. Pour les renvois à ces publications, j'ai utilisé les abréviations suivantes:

ZV: G. Zacos - A. Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, I, Basel 1972.

Z II: G. Zacos, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, II, Bern 1984.

[2] J'ai essayé de montrer cela dans: *The Usual Lead Seal*, dans *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 37 (1983), pp. 147-157.

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Il est probable que cette façon de reproduire des boulloteria quasi identiques présentait aussi l'avantage de faciliter le travail du graveur. Faire rentrer une longue inscription sur une surface petite et ronde n'est pas une chose des plus faciles; les graveurs des bulles étaient obligés d'utiliser un compas qui leur permettait, en partant d'un point central (dont la trace subsiste souvent sur les sceaux), de placer les lettres sur toute la surface et de reproduire toute l'inscription avec des abréviations qui ne soient pas exagérées – c'est à dire qui ne risquaient pas d'être incompréhensibles. On conçoit que l'existence d'un modèle à recopier simplifiait considérablement le travail du graveur.

Mais il reste toujours le besoin objectif de sécurité; il fallait reproduire la même bulle, à laquelle le destinataire était habitué et dont il était capable de reconnaître l'authenticité. Pour ce faire, un rôle important était joué par la façon dont la bulle était attachée au document, par le genre de bulle que l'expéditeur utilisait de façon normale lorsqu'il s'adressait à tel ou tel destinataire, ou à un destinataire de tel ou tel niveau social ou administratif, par la façon dont le document était plié, etc. Tout ceci nous est montré dans un manuel de diplomatique patriarcale du XIV^e^ siècle [3].

Regardons maintenant le contenu normal d'une bulle de plomb. Il peut varier très considérablement, de la même façon qu'une carte de visite peut varier aujourd'hui. Il y a des sceaux anonymes; ceux qui mentionnent seulement le prénom de leur propriétaire; ceux qui portent des images ou des monogrammes; ceux qui portent de longues inscriptions mentionnant le prénom et le nom de famille, tous les titres et toutes les charges de leur propriétaire. Il est évident que ces petits monuments servaient à manifester certaines idées, surtout à propager une image de la personne, c'est à dire l'image que leur propriétaire voulait se donner.

Il va sans dire que ces attitudes, essentiellement individuelles, peuvent changer d'une bulle à l'autre. Mais il y a aussi certaines attitudes collectives, que l'on reconnaît à des groupes de sceaux. Nous laisserons de côté les bulles impériales, dont le contenu idéologique est évident, puisqu'elles font partie de l'effort constant de propagande impériale. Nous nous limiterons à certaines questions posées par des groupes de sceaux non-exceptionnels, ceux qui ont appartenu à des Byzantins moyens. Nous tâcherons de comprendre le banal plutôt que l'exceptionnel, et nous tâcherons de voir ce qu'il nous apprend des idéologies ambiantes et de la réalité sociale dans l'empire.

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[3] Voir J. Darrouzès, *Ekthésis Néa. Manuel des pittakia du XIV^e^ siècle*, dans *Revue des Études Byzantines*, 27 (1969), pp. 5-127.

Sceaux à deux noms

Il y a quinze ans que John Nesbitt a étudié les bulles de la période ancienne (allant jusqu'au VIII^{e} siècle) portant deux noms [4]. Il a trouvé des bulles collectives, pour des associations d'affaires, comme c'est le cas de Γεωργίου καὶ 'Ιωάννου ἀργυροπρατῶν (ZV, 828) ou le cas des sceaux collectifs de kommerkiarioi; il a même trouvé des associations qui ne sont pas nécessairement liées aux affaires, comme c'est le cas de Παύλου πρεσβυτέρου καὶ Θεοδώρου μοναχῶν (ZV, 2910). De tels sceaux d'associés se retrouvent aussi plus tard, au X^{e} siècle, où nous trouvons même une compagnie de trois associés, Leon, Christophoros et Anastasios (Z II, 997).

Mais le plus grand nombre des bulles à deux noms servaient à identifier un individu: elles portaient normalement le prénom de leur propriétaire au nominatif, au génitif ou au datif, accompagné du nom de son père (toujours au génitif). Il est évident qu'au VI^{e} siècle l'usage du gentilice avait disparu depuis longtemps sous la pression des pères de l'église et les noms avaient quitté la forme romaine pour retourner à la tradition grecque: prénom suivi du nom du père [5].

Mais lorsque les deux noms sont au génitif, il est pratiquement impossible de dire qui est le père et qui est le fils. Un sceau inscrit d'un côté Κωνσταντίνου et de l'autre Μιχαήλ (ZV, 306) peut être compris comme appartenant à « Constantin fils de Michel » ou à « Michel fils de Constantin ». Cette incertitude était sans doute connue des gens de l'époque qui ont essayé d'y remédier en gravant le nom du vrai propriétaire, du « fils », au nominatif ou au datif. Cependant, la grande majorité des bulles, qui suivent la formule habituelle de l'époque, portent le prénom du propriétaire au génitif, ainsi que le prénom de son père. D'où la confusion des chercheurs modernes.

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[4] J. Nesbitt, *Double Names on Early Byzantine Lead Seals*, dans *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 31 (1977), pp. 109-121.

[5] Cf. A. K[azhdan], *Names, Personal*, dans le *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, (éd. par A. P. Kazhdan - A. M. Talbot - A. Cutler - T. E. Gregory - N. P. Ševčenko, I-III, New York-Oxford 1991), II, pp. 1435-1436.

Il est certain que, à l'époque de la confection des bulles, la confusion était moindre qu'aujourd'hui. Le nom du propriétaire de la bulle figurait probablement quelque part sur le document scellé, ou était autrement connu au récipiendaire de l'acte. Mais je crois que ce manque de clarté dans l'inscription pouvait aussi rendre un service pratique: il permettait d'utiliser le même boullotèrion dans la famille pendant plus d'une génération. Rappelons l'habitude que les Byzantins avaient de donner au fils le prénom de son grand père: les deux noms de la bulle étant au génitif, le boullotèrion pouvait passer du père à son premier fils sans problème. Le sceau de Constantin fils de Michel pouvait être lu comme sceau de Michel fils de Constantin lorsqu'il passait de père en fils. Etant donné qu'il s'agissait d'un sceau privé, utilisé pour la correspondance familiale, on peut imaginer qu'il n'était pas trop utilisé et, par conséquent, le boullotèrion pouvait durer plus d'une génération.

Ceci est un aspect pratique, peu important. Mais cette hypothèse, si elle s'avérait juste, aurait des conséquences considérables sur notre compréhension de la structure sociale à l'époque protobyzantine: le patronyme s'ajoute au prénom pour mieux identifier un individu dans son milieu social; le patronyme devient prénom et le prénom patronyme à la génération suivante. Le principe abstrait de la famille d'élite est renforcé par le passage de père en fils du boullotèrion, qui devient ainsi un emblème non seulement de l'individu mais aussi de toute sa famille – ce qui montrerait que la naissance avait son importance pour la définition de la place de quelqu'un dans la société, bien avant l'apparition des patronymes qui, eux, constitueront le signe le plus évident du classement social selon les origines individuelles.

Car, en fait, nous avons ici affaire à des membres de familles distinguées sinon aristocratiques. La preuve en est qu'ils possédaient leur bulle privée, sans doute autre que celle que tel ou tel de ses membres se faisait fabriquer pour indiquer sa position dans la machine de l'état. Il est cependant intéressant que le nom du père est parfois ajouté sur le sceau même si l'individu porte un titre honorifique ou exerce une fonction. Mais ceci est plutôt rare [6].

SCEAUX BILINGUES

Un autre problème de caractère général est posé par les sceaux bilingues de cette période ancienne. E. Stepanova s'est déjà occupée de la question: elle constate que la plupart des sceaux avec inscriptions latines ou gréco-latines viennent de l'occident, les attribue à des fonctionnaires grecs, qui y ont été envoyés après la reconquête du temps de Justinien, et les date entre le VI^e siècle et le VIII^e siècle [7].

Le problème des deux langues dans Byzance des premiers siècles est bien connu, comme l'est la graduelle expulsion du latin hors de Constantinople. Il est également clair que dans la partie occidentale de l'empire le latin prévalait. A Ravenne il y avait des orientaux qui connaissaient le latin parlé mais qui, manifestement, ne savaient pas l'écrire et qui pour cette raison ont signé des accords sur papyrus en langue latine écrite en caractères grecs [8]. Si telle était la situation des habitants de Ravenne, on peut imaginer que les difficultés posées par l'usage du latin étaient plus grandes dans la partie orientale de l'empire. D'où l'intérêt de la question des sceaux bilingues: pour quelle raison les fabriquait-on en Orient?

On peut comprendre qu'on ait fabriqué des sceaux entièrement en latin, qui seraient utilisés en Italie ou en Afrique du nord; et, en effet, de tels sceaux s'y trouvent en nombres considérables: c'est le cas de plusieurs sceaux individuels mais aussi de sceaux d'exarques ou d'autres fonctionnaires des exarchats. Mais des sceaux semblables étaient aussi utilisés dans la partie orientale de l'empire: par exemple, un comes d'Abydos du VI^e siècle possédait aussi un sceau unilingue latin (ZV, 2871: *Constantinou comitos Abydou*);

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[6] Par exemple ZV, 363 ('Ιωάννου, υἱοῦ Μεζέ, ἀπὸ ὑπάτων), 388 ('Ιωάννου, υἱοῦ Μεζέ, πατϱικίου), 531 (Θεοδώϱου πατϱικίου, υἱοῦ Θεοδώϱου), 879 (Θεοτόκε βοήθει 'Ιωάννῃ πατϱικίῳ, υἱῷ Εὐδοκίμου).

[7] E. V. STEPANOVA, *The Seals with Latin Inscriptions from the Hermitage Collection*, dans *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, 3 (1993), pp. 29-39.

[8] Cf. *La paléographie grecque et byzantine*, Paris 1977 (*Colloques internationaux du CNRS*, 559), pp. 525-528.

serait-ce pour sceller des documents adressés à des ports de la *pars occidentis*? On ne saurait le dire avec certitude. D'autre part, il faut noter que des sceaux unilingues latins se trouvent sur tout le territoire oriental de l'empire, comme, par exemple: *Theodosio illustri*, trouvé en Dobroudja; *Petru scribonos*, trouvé en Crète; *Carellu candidatu*, trouvé à Athènes; *Sergii illustrii et comitis*, trouvé à Samos [9]. Par conséquent l'usage du latin devait avoir une signification autre que le simple besoin pratique de se faire comprendre par son correspondant, présumé latinophone.

Bien entendu, ce besoin de se faire comprendre existait et était reconnu comme tel. Nous pouvons même imaginer que dans l'usage de l'une ou de l'autre langue un élément d'amour-propre jouait aussi un certain rôle. On connait plusieurs cas où un individu possède deux sceaux, un en grec et un en latin, sur lesquels on lit les mêmes titres; il est évident que, dans ces cas, l'individu variait son sceau en fonction des récipiendaires de ses lettres.

Nous pouvons citer le cas des sacellaires Leontios (642-647) et Maurikios (654-668), dont les sceaux latins datés ont été découverts à Carthage. D'autre part, leurs sceaux grecs avec le même titre de sacellaire ont été découverts à Constantinople. Deux hypothèses sont possibles. L'une serait qu'ils auraient exercé la fonction de sacellaire à Carthage avant d'être promus au poste de sacellaire constantinopolitain [10]. Ce serait là une coincidence remarquable que d'avoir deux fonctionnaires de la même époque qui aient suivi la même carrière. L'autre hypothèse, qui me semble plus probable, c'est que ces fonctionnaires constantinopolitains avaient fait faire un sceau latin pour leur correspondance avec (ou pour certifier les émissions monétaires de) l'occident, dont Carthage faisait partie.

Un phénomène intéressant, que l'on rencontre déjà dans la catégorie des sceaux unilingues latins, est que l'écriture étant latine, la langue est en fait grecque, comme le montrent les terminaisons des mots: *Sergiu palatinu, Ioannu, Carellu candidatu, Constantinu scribonos, Eutychianu illustriu* ne sont que quelques exemples (ZV, 488A, 633, 767, 786, 806) qui pourraient très facilement être multipliés. Bien entendu, nous trouvons aussi des sceaux rédigés en latin correct, comme, par exemple, *Carello magistro militum, Constanti chartulario, Genethlio ex consule, Genethlium ex consule et patricium* (ZV, 768, 773A, 810, 811), mais ces sceaux en latin correct sont vraiment très rares en dehors de l'Italie et de l'Afrique.

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[9] Sceaux dont le lieu de trouvaille, autre que Constantinople, est connu; voir *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, 1 (1987), p. 77; 2 (1990), pp. 147, 242, 258.

[10] C. Morrisson - W. Seibt, *Sceaux de commerciaires byzantins du VIIe siècle trouvés à Carthage*, dans *Revue Numismatique*, 24 (1982), p. 238.

Ces deux phénomènes apparaissent dans les sceaux bilingues les plus nombreux, ceux qui portent le nom du propriétaire écrit en grec d'un côté, en latin de l'autre: l'inscription latine est parfois correcte (par exemple Μαρίνου - *Marini*: ZV, 2900); mais plus souvent elle est une transcription de la forme grecque en caractères latins ('Αθηνογένους - *Atinogenus*: ZV, 2863) [11]. La même chose apparaît sur les quelques sceaux dont la légende entière est écrite en grec d'un côté et en latin de l'autre [12]. Il est hautement significatif que l'inscription grecque est pratiquement toujours correcte, ce qui veut dire que le grec était la langue dominante et ambiante, et qu'il influençait l'autre langue. Il faut donc conclure que la traduction se faisait normalement du grec au latin. Et on se posera la question: pourquoi se donnait-on la peine de traduire les légendes, puisque les propriétaires vivaient dans un milieu grécophone? Pour respecter le principe du bilinguisme? Mais s'il en était ainsi, pourquoi y a-t-il eu tant de Byzantins qui ont opté pour les sceaux unilingues, grecs ou latins, sans se soucier du bilinguisme?

Serait-ce une question de pur traditionnalisme? C'est le cas des sceaux bilingues à deux noms différents, comme, par exemple, ZV, 2801: 'Ιωάννου - *Mariani*. Il est évident que l'un des deux noms est le patronyme. Dans ces cas, j'aurais tendance à voir une de ces familles romaines qui sont venues s'installer à Constantinople (notamment je pense aux familles sénatoriales que Constantin le Grand a fait venir) et qui étaient sur le point de se gréciser: le prénom du père était écrit dans la langue « ancestrale », le latin, mais le prénom du fils dans la langue ambiante, le grec. Je comprendrais donc que ce sceau avait appartenu à un certain Jean fils de Marianus.

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[11] Dans la collection ZV j'ai relevé dix-huit cas où le nom latin n'a pas subi l'influence du grec (ZV, 290, 321, 333, 351, 411, 419, 438, 476, 541, 571, 612, 740, 815, 841, 980, 981, 2801, 2900), et vingt-neuf cas où le nom latin est simple transcription du grec (ZV, 287, 292, 331, 332, 350, 356, 453, 472, 475, 507, 508, 556, 623, 655, 730A, 734, 763, 765, 804, 855, 892, 1025, 1056, 2789, 2793, 2794, 2810, 2863, 2922).

[12] Par exemple ZV, 991, 993, 997, 1075, 1076, 2877.

Mais ceci ne vaut pas pour les sceaux bilingues avec le nom dans l'une des langues et le titre dans l'autre. Il y en a très peu avec le nom en latin et le titre en grec, et ceci est le plus souvent dû au fait que le nom latin se présente sous forme de monogramme, sans doute un monogramme que l'on maintenait et perpétuait dans la famille. Dans la collection ZV [13] je n'ai relevé que neuf cas, impliquant les titres ἀπὸ ἐπάρχων, ἀπὸ ὑπάτων, βασιλικὸς σπαθάριος, κουβικουλάριος, πατρίκιος, ὕπατος, χαρτουλάριος. Mais on trouve plusieurs pièces avec le nom en grec et le titre en transcription latine: *admissionalem, ad sabanis, apo ypaton, asecretis, basilicu spatariu, bestitoris, chartulariu, comitis sacrarum, discussoris, domesticu, illustriu, magistru, magistro militum, moderatoros, patriciu, proticturus, referendariu, scholariu, scholasticu, scribonos, scriniariu, silentiariu, stratelatu, stratioticu logothetu, vicarii Traciae,* et plusieurs autres [14]. On remarquera avec intérêt l'absence de titres ecclésiastiques, ce qui montrerait que l'église, toujours attachée à l'idée du contact direct et immédiat avec les fidèles, ne participait pas à ce jeu de bilinguisme: l'église parlait (et faisait graver ses sceaux) dans la langue de ses ouailles, quelle qu'elle soit.

Dans quelques cas, l'inscription latine contient des lettres grecques et, plus rarement, tout est complètement mélangé: par exemple Φιλιππικοῦ *scholastici* καὶ ἰλλουστρίου (ZV, 469). Tout ceci montre à quel point il devenait difficile de trouver, à Constantinople je suppose, des artisans capables de graver sans fautes une inscription latine. Pourtant certains y tenaient encore au VII^e siècle.

Je pense au sceau d'Εὐσταθίου *stratioticu logothetu,* qui ne peut pas être antérieur au VII^e siècle, mais sur lequel on a senti le besoin de transcrire en latin un titre grec qui venait d'être créé et qui n'avait rien à voir avec la titulature traditionnelle latine. Ce n'était pas pour s'adresser à un public latinophone car le nom du fonctionnaire est écrit en grec. Manifestement, il faut chercher une autre raison pour expliquer cette pratique.

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[13] ZV, 485, 498, 516, 524, 526, 528, 658, 1088, 1387.

[14] ZV, 305, 311, 312, 313, 314, 335, 339, 346, 348, 353, 373, 384, 389, 392, 436, 449, 469, 501, 511A, 533, 539, 544, 732, 769, 805, 813, 1028, 1634A, 1635, 2776, 2780, 2788, 2796, 2802, 2804, 2830, 2833.

Autre exemple: au VI^{e} siècle un certain Carellus était devenu magister militum et a fait faire un sceau latin avec ce titre. Mais il a aussi voulu faire un sceau grec: Καρέλλου *stratelatu*, avec la différence que, sur ce sceau, le titre de *stratelates*, qui est la traduction grecque de *magister militum*, a été gravé en caractères latins. Il me semble évident que cette fantaisie, comme celle du logothète du stratiotikon, ne peut s'expliquer que si l'on attribuait à l'alphabet latin la qualité d'alphabet noble, dans lequel il était convenable d'exprimer les appellations des titres et des fonctions. Un alphabet noble pour l'administration à une époque où le latin était encore connu, et, on peut le supposer, parlé au moins par une certaine élite. A croire les miracles de Saint Démétrius, le latin était encore considéré comme une langue normalement parlée à Thessalonique dans les dernières décennies du VII^{e} siècle [15]. Etait-ce à cause du fait que l'Illyrikon dépendait encore de l'église de Rome et que, par conséquent, les autorités ecclésiastiques étaient forcées de maintenir la connaissance de cette langue afin de pouvoir communiquer avec le pape? C'est en tout cas ce que semble dire Jean Lydos, lorsqu'il affirme que les habitants « de l'Europe », bien que pour la plupart d'origine grecque, parlaient le latin, surtout ceux qui s'occupaient d'affaires publiques [16].

Une variante de la combinaison ci-dessus: d'un côté on trouve le monogramme du nom dans l'une des langues; de l'autre, le nom et le titre de l'individu dans l'autre langue: Εὐθαλίου - *Euthalii chartularii*; 'Ιωάννου - *Ioanu scribonos (kai) stratoros*; Θεοδώρου - *Theodoru stratoros*; ou, inversement: *Mariani*- Μαριανοῦ σκριβωνος; *Theodori* - Θεοδώρου πατρικίου [17]. Je pense que, dans tous ces cas, il faut imaginer quelqu'un qui tient à un monogramme, grec ou latin, parce qu'il l'a déjà sur une bague ou parce que c'est un monogramme qui a une histoire dans la famille.

Dans ces combinaisons, il faut enfin tenir compte des effets du hasard: par exemple, le remplacement d'un bras seulement du boullotèrion peut aboutir à des resultats incompréhensibles et sans importance. *Deus adjuta* Θεοδώρου (ZV, 506), *Theodoru* δούλου τῆς Θεοτόκου (ZV, 1026), Νίκη *Theodoru* (ZV, 1388), Θεοτόκε βοήθει *Remulus illustris* (ZV, 1596). Pour quelle autre raison aurait-on mis l'invocation dans une langue et le nom dans une autre? Sans parler de l'incohérence qui est ainsi créée entre la phrase qui demande un complément au datif et le complément réel qui est soit au génitif soit au nominatif. Mais c'est là un problème auquel nous reviendrons à propos des invocations sur les sceaux à légende grecque.

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[15] Voir M. Grègoriou-Iôannidou, *Μιὰ παρατήρηση στὴ διήγηση τῶν θαυμάτων τοῦ Ἁγίου Δημητρίου*, dans *Βυζαντιακά*, 3 (1983), pp. 83-87.

[16] Jean Lydos, *De magistratibus*, III, 68 (éd. Wunsch, pp. 158-159): περὶ τὴν Εὐρώπην πραττόμενα ... τοὺς αὐτῆς οἰκήτορας, καίπερ Ἕλληνας ἐκ τοῦ πλείονος ὄντας, τῇ τῶν 'Ιταλῶν φθέγγεσθαι φωνῇ, καὶ μάλιστα τοὺς δημοσιεύοντας.

[17] ZV, 326, 391, 2827; 422, 526.

EXPRESSIONS DE PIÉTÉ

Le sceau était en principe et initialement rédigé au génitif, un génitif possessif, qui désignait le propriétaire de la pièce. Le mot σφραγίς, sceau, était donc sous-entendu. Dans cet esprit ont été conçus et fabriqués, pour la plupart, les monogrammes des noms qui doivent être lus presque toujours au génitif.

Avec le temps et l'implantation du christianisme, on a senti le besoin d'ajouter sur le sceau quelque chose de pieux. Une première manifestation de cette tendance fut l'ajout à la fin de l'inscription du complément δοῦλος, esclave, suivi par le nom d'une personne sacrée: le plus courant de tous est δοῦλος τῆς Θεοτόκου (60 exemples dans la collection ZV), mais aussi δοῦλος Χριστοῦ (10 exemples), δοῦλος Σωτῆρος (1 exemple), δοῦλος Θεοῦ (3 exemples), δοῦλος σταυροῦ (2 exemples), δοῦλος τῆς Ἁγίας Τριάδος (1 exemple), δοῦλος τῆς Ἁγίας Σοφίας (1 exemple), δοῦλος τοῦ Ἁγίου Θεοδώρου (1 exemple). Des expressions du genre sont d'ailleurs aussi connues dans d'autres milieux [18]. En général il s'agit de laïcs, parfois de laïcs titrés; par contre les ecclésiastiques sont rares dans ce groupe. Comme le montre un sceau latin du VI^e siècle, *Theophanii servi Dei Genetricis* [19], le mot Theotokos était compris dans son sens étymologique le plus pur – on dirait en réaction contre le nestorianisme, qui, bien que condamné, faisait alors des progrès en Syrie et encore plus à l'est, où il était propagé, semble-t-il, par des marchands.

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[18] Par exemple, des *servi Dei* sont mentionnés dans des graffiti romains: O. MARUCCHI, *Il cimitero di Commodilla e la basilica cimiteriale dei SS. Felice ed Adautto ivi recentemente scoperta*, dans *Nuovo bullettino di archeologia cristiana*, 10 (1904), p. 149.

[19] V. LAURENT, *Les sceaux byzantins du médailler Vatican*, Città del Vaticano 1962, n° 234. D'autres exemples dans ZV.

Ces exemples datent tous du VI^{e} et du VII^{e} siècle. Ils constituent des éléments importants qui devraient être pris en considération par les spécialistes s'occupant du culte de la Vierge; ceux-ci trouvent les origines de cette consécration d'individus à la Vierge chez des orateurs africains des V^{e} et VI^{e} siècles, dans l'expression « servus Mariae » utilisée par Saint Ildefonsus de Toledo († 667) et par le pape Jean VII († 707); du côté grec, les citations ne montent pas plus haut que Saint Jean Damascène (VIII^{e} siècle) [20]. Mais la documentation sigillographique, jusqu'à présent négligée, ouvrirait dans ce domaine de nouvelles perspectives. Des questions analogues devront être posées à mon avis, pour voir dans quelle mesure les autres expressions mentionnées ci-dessus ne seraient pas des signes annonciateurs d'idéologies liées aux autres querelles religieuses, le monophysisme, le monothélétisme, etc., sans parler de la préparation du mouvement iconoclaste (auquel font penser les expressions δοῦλος σταυροῦ et δοῦλος τῆς ʽΑγίας Τριάδος).

Ces expressions de piété nous posent encore un problème auquel nous ne sommes pas en mesure de répondre avec certitude: la phrase *doulos* d'un tel, montrait-elle seulement une piété particulière de l'individu, une consécration personnelle, ou bien signifiait-elle que l'individu faisait partie d'une association pieuse? Je ne peux pas m'empêcher de penser à un texte, effectivement trop tardif mais le seul de cette nature que nous ayons: c'est le règlement de la confraternité de la Panagia Naupaktitissa de Thèbes, qui est signé par ses membres qui déclarent être les esclaves de la Naupaktitissa (ὁμολογῶ εἶναι με δοῦλος τῆς Θεοτόκου τῆς Νεπακτητίσσης, etc. [21]. La ressemblance est trop grande pour être ignorée.

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[20] Voir M. O'CARROLL, *Theotokos. A Theological Encyclopedia of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, 2^{e} éd. Wilmington 1986, pp. 107 et suiv.; R. DESHMAN, *Servants of the Mother of God in Byzantine and Medieval Art*, dans *Word and Image*, 5 (1989), pp. 33-70; et, surtout, A. KARTSONIS, *The Identity of the Image of the Virgin and the Iconoclastic Controversy: before and after*, à paraître dans les *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* (je suis reconnaissant à A. Kartsonis qui m'a communiqué le manuscrit de son article).

[21] J. NESBITT - J. WIITA, *A Confraternity of the Comnenian Era*, dans *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 69 (1975), pp. 360-384.

Un autre texte, qui daterait du X^e siècle tardif, montre mieux comment une telle soumission pourrait s'opérer. Il s'agit du récit des miracles de la Vierge tès Pègès (la Zôodochos Pègè, Balıklı) de Constantinople. Nous apprenons qu'un certain Stéphanos Katzator fut guéri d'une longue et pénible maladie, grâce à l'intervention de la Vierge. A la suite de quoi Stéphane, qui est resté laïc et garda son emploi, s'est engagé par écrit à être l'esclave de la Vierge (δοῦλος τῆς Θεοτόκου) et devint le premier des frères de la presbeia [22], c'est à dire il s'est mis à la tête du groupe de laïcs organisant la procession de l'icône de la Vierge [23]. Ce qui est important pour nous, c'est qu'il y a eu engagement par écrit suivi de la participation du laïc à une confrérie dédiée à l'image et composée de personnes qui déclaraient être les « esclaves de la Vierge ».

Evidemment, tout ceci se passe à une époque tout autre que celle des sceaux que nous étudions. De plus, nos connaissances sur les confraternités des premiers siècles sont limitées; mais on peut imaginer quelque chose de semblable aux *spoudaioi* et aux *philoponoi*, associations charitables et religieuses qui avaient des chapitres dans plusieurs villes aux V^e et VI^e siècles [24]. On pourrait aussi penser à des diakonies, ces associations de bienfaisance, composées surtout de laïcs – souvent de laïcs de marque – qui, de l'Orient, sont passées à Rome [25]. Serait-il impossible qu'il y ait une confraternité des *douloi tès Theotokou*, dont les membres seraient surtout des laïcs? On pourrait imaginer une association analogue, bien que plus localisée, des *douloi* de Saint Théodore que l'on pourrait comparer à la synodia de Saint Georges attestée dans une inscription d'Asie Mineure [26]. On pourrait imaginer d'autres associations semblables dédiées au Christ, à la Croix, ou à Saint Sophie (l'église de Constantinople?). Mais, dans cette perspective, je dois avouer que je comprends mal quel serait le sens d'une confraternité dédiée à Dieu (τοῦ Θεοῦ). Ce sont là des problèmes à retenir et à approfondir.

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[22] *Acta Sanctorum, Novembre*, III, 888C: καὶ τὸ εἶναι δοῦλος τῆς Θεοτόκου διὰ γραφῆς πιστωσάμενος, νῦν καὶ πρῶτος τῶν ἀδελφῶν τῆς πρεσβείας ἐστίν, ἀπηλλαγμένος τῆς νόσου καὶ μετερχόμενος τὰ κατὰ συνήθειαν.

[23] Sur ces processions voir le témoignage sigillographique dans V. LAURENT, *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin*, V, 2, Paris 1965, pp. 118 et suiv., surtout p. 121.

[24] Au sujet des confraternités à l'époque ancienne voir J. DUHR, *La confrérie dans la vie de l'église*, dans *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 35 (1939), pp. 437-478; la bibliographie citée dans *The Oxford Dictionary* cit., I, p. 494; et, en tout dernier lieu, G. DAGRON, dans *Hommes et richesses dans l'empire byzantin. VIII^e-XV^e siècle*, éd. par V. KRAVARI - J. LEFORT - C. MORRISSON, Paris 1991, pp. 175 et suiv.

[25] Cf. LAURENT, *Le Corpus* cit., pp. 125 et suiv.; E. PATLAGEAN, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, IV^e-VII^e siècles*, Paris-La Haye 1977, pp. 192 et suiv.; J. DURLIAT, *De la ville antique à la ville byzantine. Le problème des subsistances*, Rome 1990, pp. 164 et suiv.

INVOCATION

On a aussi ajouté aux sceaux une invocation pieuse, d'habitude Κύριε ou Θεοτόκε βοήθει, parfois (rarement à la haute époque) accompagnée du complément τῷ σῷ δούλῳ, qui précisait pour qui l'aide du Seigneur ou de la Vierge était demandée. Cependant, comme cette invocation occupait d'habitude un côté du sceau, l'autre étant réservé au nom et au titre du bénéficiaire, l'ensemble n'a souvent pas été compris comme une seule phrase. Ainsi nous avons des pièces du VII^e^ siècle qui pourraient appartenir à la même personne et qui sont formulées de façon différente: Θεοτόκε βοήθει 'Αναστασίου, στρατηλάτου et Θεοτόκε βοήθει 'Αναστασίῳ στρατηλάτῃ; Θεοτόκε βοήθει Κωνσταντίνου ὑπάτου et Θεοτόκε βοήθει Κωνσταντίνῳ ὑπάτῳ (ZV, 738, 739, 780, 781). Etant donné que le verbe βοηθῶ ne peut pas se construire avec un génitif, il faut par rigorisme adopter deux traductions différentes pour ces inscriptions si proches: dans un cas, on traduira « Mère de Dieu porte secours au stratelates Anastasios »; dans l'autre, on traduira: « Sceau du stratelates Anastasios » – « Mère de Dieu porte secours » sans préciser qui est l'objet du secours.

Je suppose que cette formule décousue est à l'origine de la formulation des sceaux byzantins. Au génitif possessif, indiquant le propriétaire du sceau, on a d'abord ajouté une formule générale de piété, une exclamation pieuse, Θεοτόκε βοήθει, βόηθα Παναγιά, visant à preciser l'attitude personnelle du propriétaire. Une exclamation, comme celles qui se rencontrent parfois sur des inscriptions où il n'y a pas de complément à la phrase Κύριε (ou ὁ Θεός, etc.) βοήθει [27]. Pour passer de là à la construction d'une prière pour le propriétaire du sceau, il n'y avait qu'un petit pas à faire, mettre son nom au datif plutôt qu'au génitif.

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[26] Cf. DUHR, *La confrérie* cit., p. 445.

[27] Cf. par exemple le *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, 37 (1987), n° 1342, 1408, 1430, 1506, 1788, 1835.

D'ailleurs, on a l'impression que cet usage sigillographique a introduit ou a renforcé l'incertitude syntaxique qui caractérise le peuple du Bas empire; ainsi on rencontre des inscriptions où le verbe βοηθῶ est délibérément construit avec le génitif, comme par exemple ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ ῾Αγίου Γεωργίου βοήθει τοῦ δούλου σου Λεοντίου[28]. L'idée de la prière s'est même complétée avec l'addition, parfois, à la fin de l'inscription du mot ἀμήν (par exemple ZV, 1924; Z II, 895, 897, 921), qui montre mieux que tout autre comment l'inscription a fini par être comprise.

La formule décousue a survécu, elle aussi, pendant longtemps. Non seulement on la trouve sur des sceaux anciens où l'invocation se trouve gravée sur la même surface que le nom (par exemple ZV, 828 du VII^e siècle: Θεοτόκε βοήθει Γεωργίου - καὶ Ἰωάννου ἀργυροπρατῶν), mais on la trouve aussi sur des sceaux tardifs du IX^e et du X^e siècle: par exemple Θεοτόκε βοήθει Θεοδώρου βασιλικοῦ μανδάτωρος (ZV, 2438, VIII/IX^e siècle) ou Θεοτόκε βοήθει τῇ σῇ δούλῃ Ἄννας πατρικίας (ZV, 1718, IX/X^e siècle) ou Θεοτόκε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Νικήτᾳ βασιλικοῦ κανδιδάτου καὶ πρωτονοταρίου τοῦ Αἰγαίου Πελάγους (Z II, 1080, IX/X^e siècle).

Mais il est vrai que la formule construite entièrement au datif s'est imposée d'une façon générale au cours du VIII^e siècle. La raison en est, je crois, la mode d'utiliser sur les sceaux le monogramme cruciforme inscrit du tétrasyllabe Τω - Cω | Δȣ - Λω aux cantons. La phrase τῷ σῷ δούλῳ spécifiait que la prière avait comme objet la personne du propriétaire; on a donc pris l'habitude de tout exprimer au datif. L'habitude est même allée si loin qu'on a fini par graver l'inscription des sceaux au datif, même là où il n'y avait aucune invocation, comme par exemple: τῷ ἱερωτάτῳ μητροπολίτῃ Μιχαὴλ Ἀβυδηνοῦ (Z II, 587) ou Σαμουὴλ βασιλικῷ πρωτοσπαθαρίῳ (Z II, 697), etc. et même dans des phrases où le datif est erroné: Δέσποινα σώζοις Εὐστρατίῳ μοναχῷ καὶ μητροπολίτῃ Ἀλανίας (Z II, 810). D'autre part, l'existence d'une invocation n'a pas empêché, dans quelques cas, de rédiger l'inscription au nominatif, montrant ainsi que le rapport entre la prière et le nom du propriétaire n'était pas senti comme obligatoire (par exemple Θεοτόκε βοήθει Θεόδωρος πρωτοσπαθάριος καὶ στρατηγός: Z II, 739; Θεοτόκε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Ῥωμανὸς ἀσηκρῆτις καὶ σκρίβας: Z II, 878).

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[28] Ibid., n° 616.

L'uniformité déconcertante de cette formule pendant une dizaine de siècles finit par créer une certaine indifférence à son sujet. On trouve des sceaux avec des répétitions inutiles. Par exemple, sur le Z II, 146, d'un côté nous lisons Ἅγιε βοήθει Εὐσταθίῳ, et de l'autre Εὐστάθιος πρωτοσπαθάριος, κριτὴς ἐπὶ τοῦ Ἱπποδρόμου καὶ τοῦ Χαρσιανοῦ. Même chose sur le Z II, 838, qui porte d'un côté Θεοτόκε βοήθει Λέοντα, et de l'autre Θεοτόκε βοήθει Λέοντι βέστῃ καὶ πραίτωρι.

Cette particularité, la répétition inutile du prénom, bien que rare, doit pouvoir s'expliquer par une pratique qui, elle, était courante chez le byzantin moyen, à savoir la tendance à préserver inchangée, dans la mesure du possible, une partie du sceau, qui servait à identifier l'individu. Dans les deux cas ci-dessus, nous pouvons imaginer que l'avers de la pièce restait inchangé, alors que le revers était changé pour contenir la mention des nouveaux titres et dignités du propriétaire. Un heureux hasard nous permet de le démontrer avec des pièces bien connues, les sceaux de l'eunuque Théophane, fidèle serviteur de Romain I^{er} Lécapène. Nous avons ses sceaux du temps où il était (a) primikerios, protospatharios et protovestiarios de l'empereur (920-934), (b) patrikios et protovestiarios de l'empereur (934-941) et (c) patrikios et parakoimomenos (941-946)[29]. Il n'y a pas de doute que ce sont là les sceaux d'une même personne parce que les trois pièces ont des avers identiques et fort originaux: sur les trois exemplaires, une inscription circulaire entoure le nom du propriétaire inscrit au centre en monogramme cruciforme cantonné de quatre rosaces: Σταυρὸς σκέπη, φῶς, δόξα τῷ Θεοφάνει. Sur la plus ancienne des trois pièces, l'inscription continue normalement sur l'autre côté πριμικηρίῳ, βασιλικῷ πρωτοσπαθαρίῳ καὶ πρωτοβεστιαρίῳ τοῦ φιλοχρίστου δεσπότου. Mais sur les deux autres pièces, qui sont plus tardives, le revers de la pièce contient une nouvelle invocation avec encore une fois le nom, accompagné maintenant des titres qui ont changé (par exemple dans la deuxième étape de sa carrière: Σταυρὸς σκέπη, φῶς, δόξα τῷ Θεοφάνει. Κύριε βοήθει τῷ σῷ πιστῷ δούλῳ Θεοφάνει πατρικίῳ καὶ πρωτοβεστιαρίῳ τοῦ φιλοχρίστου δεσπότου). Il est clair que, dans ce cas, Théophane a insisté pour conserver l'avers de son sceau, qui identifiait sa personne indépendamment des titres et fonctions qu'il accumulait ou ajoutait avec le temps.

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[29] Z II, 1086, 1085, 1084; j'ai repris ces pièces dans *A Collection of Dated Byzantine Lead Seals*, Washington 1986, n° 59, 62, 64.

De tels changements d'inscription visant à introduire un nouveau titre obtenu par le propriétaire se retrouvent assez souvent. Prenons deux sceaux anonymes de métropolites d'Euchaita, la patrie de Saint Théodore. Le premier (Z II, 842) comporte d'un côté l'effigie du saint et l'inscription Μάρτυς θύτην σόν, qui constitue un demi dodecasyllabe; de l'autre côté il y a un dodécasyllabe complet: Τὸν Εὐχαΐτων πρωτοσύγκελλον σκέπε. Il est évident que le sceau portait initialement un dodécasyllabe, Μάρτυς θύτην σὸν τὸν Εὐχαΐτων σκέπε, et que l'on a modifié le revers lorsque le prélat obtint le titre honorifique de protosyncelle. Mais ce faisant, on a pris soin de ne pas toucher à l'avers.

Autre exemple identique concernant la même église (Z II, 843). Avers: 'Αθλητὰ σῷζε; revers: σύγκελλον οἰκτρόν, Εὐχαΐτων ποιμένα. Ici aussi le point de départ était un vers simple, 'Αθλητὰ σῷζε Εὐχαΐτων ποιμένα, que l'on a modifié lorsque le propriétaire obtint la dignité de syncelle, sans toucher à l'avers de la bulle.

Une dernière curiosité. On trouve souvent sur les sceaux, surtout ceux de moines, des épithètes d'humilité comme ἁμαρτωλός, οἰκτρός, etc. Ces qualificatifs sont plutôt rares sur les sceaux des laïcs. Cependant, nous avons une bulle avec l'image de la Vierge sur l'avers et l'inscription suivante sur le revers: Θεοτόκε βοήθει Μαρίᾳ τῇ δυστυχεῖ πρωτοσπαθαρίᾳ: « Vierge porte secours à Marie, la malheureuse protospatharia ». La protospatharia est la femme d'un protospathaire. Dans le cas présent, je pense qu'il s'agit d'une veuve, qui, restée seule et étant probablement lettrée, a fait fabriquer son boullotèrion personnel sur lequel elle a affiché son chagrin.

Et sur cette note touchante et peu banale, je crois que je peux terminer mon discours sur quelques banalités à propos des sceaux byzantins.

XXIX

La tour du grand chartulaire Lapardas à Thessalonique

In this text, the author proposes a new reading of two inscriptions on the façade of the tower in the Acropolis in Thessaloniki, erected around 1167 by Andronic Lapardas. The paper also deals with the personality of the founder of the tower, a distinguished warrior, accepted at the court of the Emperor Manuel I Komnenos. Special attentions has been focused on the title of megas chartuliarus borne by Lapardas. In the end, the author briefly touches upon the monk Michael Prosuchos, who supervised the construction of the tower.

Pour honorer un grand historien de l'architecture, il faut parler d'un grand bâtiment, même si celui-ci, complétement dépourvu d'ambition esthétique, avait un but purement utilitaire. Je parlerai d'une tour de l'acropole de Thessalonique située juste en face de l'entrée du monastère de Vlatadon; elle a été ajoutée, par les soins de Lapardas, à la fortification préexistante vers 1167 (certainement avant 1180), à un moment de réparations générales des fortifications de l'acropole, pour renforcer un angle de la courtine. Elle est tournée vers l'intérieur de la ville - donc elle visait à protéger les autorités, qui vivaient dans l'acropole, de la colère des thessaloniciens et non point d'une menace extérieure. Nous pouvons seulement imaginer les problèmes sociaux, auxquels faisait alors face le gouvernement de Manuel Ier Comnène, avec sa politique de grandeur à l'étranger couplée d'une politique d'extrême rigueur fiscale au pays.[1]

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La construction de la tour est commémorée par deux inscriptions faites de tuiles encastrées dans le mur de la façade; la première se situe à mi-hauteur au centre, la seconde un peu plus haut à droite. Elles ont été publiées à plusieurs reprises.[2] Les compléments que je proposerai dans ce qui suit sont fondés sur les belles photographies qui accompagnent l'édition Spieser et qui sont reproduites ici. J'ai visité la tour en septembre 1999 sans grand résultat, car je crois que ce qui est visible aujourd'hui est affecté par les travaux de conservation.

Il faut d'abord noter les formes de certaines lettres. Le *alpha* a une forme cursive; il est composé d'une tuile ronde (ou d'une tranche de tuyau) accostée d'une tuile droite et oblique. Le *omicron* est constamment fait d'une tranche de tuyau dont la hauteur est inférieure à celle des autres lettres: les *omicron* courts sont donc placés au milieu de la ligne, sauf à la ligne 3 de la deuxième inscription, où nous avons un *omicron* ajouté au dernier moment à l'interligne. La ligature *omicron-ypsilon* est formée d'une même tranche de tuyau qui s'appuie sur la base de la ligne d'écriture et est accompagnée de deux tuiles droites convergeantes en forme de V ou parallèles, ce qui donne le ȣ ou Ʉ. Une seule exception, κηροῦ à la l. 3, ou le rond est placé au milieu de la ligne et, pour cette raison, le *ou* semble est écrit à l'interligne.

Ces détails paléographiques ont leur importance pour le déchiffrement. En effet, A. Kountouras, qui a grandement avancé l'étude de l'inscription, a lu la l. 3 comme κηρο 'Ανδρονίκο το Λαπαρδᾶ et proposé de lire le tout au datif "car c'est une inscription de donation". Il me semblle qu'il n'en est rien, et que la grave incohérence syntactique créée par cette lecture n'a jamais existé. Sur le photographies Spieser je vois clairement les tuiles formant la ligature *ou* au mots κυροῦ et τοῦ. Le *ou* n'est pas visible dans le mot 'Ανδρονίκο⟨υ⟩, mais je crois que c'est là une erreur commise dès le début, ces tuiles ayant été recouvertes de plâtre. Un *ou* incomplet apparait aussi à la fin de la deuxième inscription. Dans les deux cas, la tranche de tuyau est encore visible et appuyée sur la ligne d'écriture, comme ceci se fait aux autres *ou* de l'inscription.

La première ligne de la deuxième inscription pose problème car elle est moins bien conservée. Au début je crois reconnaître un *alpha* (tranche de tuyau avec barre oblique), puis il y a un espace vide qui pourrait contenir deux lettres; puis, encore une "tranche de tuyau" qui fait penser à une lettre ronde, puis un petit *iota,* les restes d'un *kappa* (la barre verticale et la barre oblique inférieure), et les restes d'un *epsilon* lunaire. A la fin de la ligne il y a un autre vide d'une lettre suivi d'un petit *chi* à l'interligne.

Voici la transcription et restitution (en ajoutant les accents) des deux inscriptions que je propose:

ΠΗΡΓΟϹΤȣΠαΝ.ЄΒαϹΤȣϹЄΒαϹΤȣ	Πήργος[a] τοῦ παν[σ]εβάστοῦ σεβαστοῦ
ΚЄΜЄ.αλȣΧαΡΤȢλαΡΗȣ	κὲ[b] με[γ]άλου χαρτουλαρήου[c]
ΚΗΡ^{ȣ}αΝΔΡΟΝΚΟΤȣλαΠαΡΔ.	κηροῦ[d] Ἀνδρον⟨ί⟩κο⟨υ⟩ τοῦ Λαπαρδ[ᾶ]
α..ΘΙΚЄΤαΠЄỊΝΟϹ.˙	ἀ[νέ]θικε[e] ταπεινὸς [(μον)α]χ(ὸς)
ΚЄΔȣλΟϹΤȢλαΠαΡΔα	κε[b] δοῦλος τοῦ Λαπαρδᾶ
ΜΙΧαΗλ^{Ο}ΠΡ.ϹΟΧ	Μιχαὴλ ὁ Πρ[ο]σο⟨ύ⟩χ.

[a]leg.πύργος | [b]leg. καὶ | [c]leg. χαρτουλαρίου | [d]leg. κυροῦ | [e]leg. ἀνέθήκε

Traduction de l'ensemble: *Tour du pannsébaste sébaste et grand chartulaire kyr Andronic Lapardas; dédiée par l'humble moine Michel Prosouch, serviteur de Lapardas.*

Dans son étude concernant les inscriptions faites de briques ou tuiles encastrées dans le mur, G. Velenis a soupçonné qu'il s'agit là d'un texte metrique (ce qui est impossible) et a proposé de lire l'inscription du bas vers le haut (commencer de la 1. 3 de la première inscription et lire ensuite la 1. 2, etc. puis reprendre de la 1. 3 de la deuxième inscription). Ceci est effectivement une façon assez habituelle de lire ces épigraphes, qui sont "écrites" au fur et à mesure que la construction du mur avance du bas vers le haut. Mais ici cette lecture est impossible pour des raisons de déchiffrement, de syntaxe et d'histoire institutionnelle évidentes. Il faut penser que les maçons de Thessalonique ont reçu un texte complet avec division de lignes définie d'avance, et l'ont "recopié" tel quel et tant bien que mal au mur. Ceci expliquerait peut-être le nombre élevé de lettres en forme cursive que nous rencontrons ici, ainsi que le fait que la longueur des lignes ne présente pas de divergences notables. Ce texte se lit de la façon habituelle de toute inscription gravée ou peinte, à savoir du haut vers le bas.

Andronic Lapardas (ou Lampardas, nom qui reflète une lointaine origine lombarde et qui est attesté jusqu'au XV^{e} s.), dont nous avons aussi le sceau de plomb,[3] homme petit de taille mais guerrier réputé, était une personnalité bien en vue dans la cour de Manuel Ier Comnène et de ses successeurs. Il est attesté pour la première fois le 2 mars 1166; il était déjà sébaste et chartulaire, titres qui réappraissent aussi sur son sceau. Il participa aux campagnes contre les Hongrois en 1167 (Kinnamos insiste qu'il était alors chartulaire "de l'empereur", χαρτουλάριος... βασιλεῖ),[4] il participa à des opérations en Asie Mineure, où il gagna l'admiration du sultan seldjoucide (qui l'appelait "le faucon"). Il combattit à Myrioképhalon (1176) et se mêla des querelles dynastiques qui suivirent la mort de Manuel Comnène en 1180, mais il fut capturé et aveuglé en 1183, et mourut peu après. Il avait épousé une petite nièce de l'empereur Manuel Ier.[5]

En tant que parent de l'empereur et stratège distingué, Lapardas portait, comme ceci est normal au XII^{e} s., la dignité élevée de pansébaste sébaste.[6] Sa fonction, grand chartulaire, appelle quelque commentaire.

La charge de chartulaire designait initialement un fonctionnaire comptable. Des chartulaires sont attestés dans plusieurs services des finances aux IX^{e} et X^{e} siècles: le génikon, le stratiotikon, le dromos, les maisons pieuses, l'étable de l'empereur, etc.; ils sont aussi attestés aux unités militaires, les thèmes et les tagmata, où ils tenaient les rôles. Des chartulaires se trouvent aussi à la tête de certains services, surtout financiers, du palais: le chartulaire tou sakelliou (ou *ho epi tou sakelliou*: il avait la responsabilité du trésor de l'état), le chartulaire tou vestiariou (ou *ho epi tou vestiariou*: il avait la responsabilité du vestiaire public, qui recevait le produit des amendes), tous deux probablement anciens subordonnés du sacellaire – donc des comptables qui se sont trouvés en tête de leur ancien service; et plusieurs autres.[7]

Sur notre inscription nous lisons le titre de grand chartulaire, qui est attesté dans les sources narratives seulement à partir du XIIIe s.[8] Il était alors un officier militaire (comme Andronic Lapardas), important (26e dans l'ordre de préséance), qui, dans le cérémonial, maintenait quelques attributions traditionnelles, qui nous permettent de déceler ses origines relativement modestes: lui et le protostrator[9] (anciennement le chef des écuyers impériaux) conduit par la bride le cheval de l'empereur dans la cour du palais.[10] C'est là un cérémonial qui nous invite à chercher les origines de l'office aux services des écuries impériales.

Autour de l'an 900, il y avait un fonctionnaire appelé "comte de l'étable", qui contrôlait les écuries de Constantinople et celles de Malagina (premier camp fortifié en Asie Mineure) et qui était responsable des convois militaires. Il avait sous ses ordres deux chartulaires, celui des écuries de Constantinople (ἔσω χαρτουλάριος) et celui de Malagina. On peut présumer qu'ils s'occupaient de la comptabilité de ces services.[11] Or, le comte de l'étable disparait avec le XIe siècle et la chute de l'Asie Mineure. Mais le chartulaire de l'étable, un seul, réapparait vers la fin de 1094 en fonction à Constantinople: Eustathe Kamytzes était encore un officier de niveau très moyen, comme le montre la dignité de proèdre qu'il portait et sa place hiérarchique.[12] Sa fonction doit sans doute être identifiée à celle de *l'ésô chartoularios* du Xe s., qui continua à subsister au service des écuries impériales de la capitale, dont il assurait la gestion.

Comme ceci est arrivé plusieurs fois à des fonctionnaires d'attributions reliées aux chevaux du souverain (p. ex. le protostrator ou le connétable d'inspiration occidentale),[13] le chartulaire de l'étable devint vite un chef militaire de haut niveau dans l'empire. Il a été vu comme le "chartulaire de l'empereur" par excellence. On peut imaginer que certains, surtout ses subordonnés, l'appelaient déjà au XIIe s. "grand (*megas*) chartulaire", titre qui apparait sur notre inscription mais qui ne semble pas être généralisé. Il deviendra l'appellation officielle de cet officier au XIIIe s., lorsque la cour sera transférée loin de Constantinople et de ses traditions.

Le serviteur de Lapardas, qui surveilla la construction pour le compte de son maître, est mentionné dans la deuxième inscription. Il ne porte pas de titre honorifique et ne semble pas assumer une fonction précise. Il se qualifie d'"humble", ce qui fait tout de suite penser à un moine. En effet, les vestiges visibles sur la photo, notamment la lacune à la fin de la deuxième ligne suivie d'un *chi* superposé, permettent de restituer là le mot *monachos*. D'ailleurs la présence d'un substantif à cet endroit est nécessaire pour des raisons de syntaxe: le καί de la l. 2 peut unir deux substantifs, *monachos* et *doulos*, mais il est complètement inutile s'il s'agit d'unir un adjectif, *tapeinos*, au substantif *doulos*.

A côté de son statut de moine, il se qualifie aussi de *doulos* (serviteur, esclave) de Lapardas. Ce terme dénote un rapport de familiarité personnelle et n'a rien à voir avec la servitude: le *doulos* de l'empereur est en même temps son *oikeios*, son familier. Ici nous avons le même rapport personnel à un niveau inférieur: Lapardas était certainement le *doulos* de l'empereur, et Michel Prosouch était le *doulos* de Lapardas. Nous avons encore ici une des attestations, rares à Byzance, de l'établissement d'une échelle de liens de dépendance, l'amorce de l'établissement d'une pyramide sociale semblable à celle de l'Occident féodal.[14] Mais cette pyramide ne s'est jamais imposée pour caractériser la société de Constantinople.

Michel Prosouch porte un nom de famille bien attesté. Un certain Prosouch (Borsuq), Turc d'origine mais combattant pour l'empereur byzantin, était un militaire distingué, attesté en 1144 et 1147.[15] Selon une habitude déjà établie au XII^{e} s., le prénom d'un étranger "byzantinisé" devenait un patronyme pour ses descendants.[16] Michel était donc probablement un de ses fils. D'autres personnes portant le même nom sont rarement attestés plus tard, jusqu'au XIV^{e} siècle.[17]

[1] See P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, 1143-1180, Cambridge 1993.

[2] O. Tafrali, *Topographie de Thessalonique*, Paris 1913, 47; J.-M. Spieser, *Les inscriptions de Thessalonique*, TM 5 (1973) 165-166, nos. 15 et 16; A. Kountouras, dans: *Τρίτο Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινής και Μεταβυζαντινής Αρχαιολογίας και Τέχνης, Πρόγραμμα και Περιλήψεις Ανακοινώσεων*, Athènes 1983, 40; G. Velenis, *Σχόλια και παρατηρήσεις σε πολύστιχες πλίνθινες επιγραφές, Αντίφωνον. Αφιέρωμα στον καθηγητή Ν. Β. Δρανδάκη*, Thessalonique 1994, 272-275.

[3] Voir V. Laurent, dans *Échos d'Orient* 31 (1932) 338-344 repris avec compléments dans V. Laurent, *Le Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin* II, Paris 1981, no. 1167. Dans ces deux publictions on trouvera l'essentiel de ce que nous savons de la biographie de Lapardas ainsi que la liste des autres membres de la même famille connus. Un autre sceau métrique d'Andronic Lapardas, sans mention de charge ou dignité, est mentionné dans *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 6 (1999), 122.

[4] Jean Kinnamos, Bonn, 271.

[5] L. Stiernon, *Théodora Comnène et Andronic Lapardas*, REB 24 (1966), 89-96.

[6] Voir L. Stiernon, *Notes de titulature et de prosopographie byzantines: sébaste et gambros*, REB *23* (1965), 222-243.

[7] Pour ces charges on consultera mon livre *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX^e et X^e siècles*, Paris 1972, passim, et R. Guilland, *Le chartulaire et le grand chartulaire*, RESEE 9/3 (1971), 405-426.

[8] Guilland, loc. cit., 419-420

[9] *Listes*, 337-338.

[10] Pseudo-Kodinos, *Traité des offices*, éd. J. Verpeaux, Paris 1966, 168.

[11] *Listes*, 338-339.

[12] Migne, *Patrologia graeca* 127, 973; cf. P. Gautier, *Le synode des Blachernes (fin 1094). Etude prosopographique*, REB 29 (1971), 259-260.

[13] R, Guilland, *Le grand connétable*, Byzantion 19 (1949), 99-111 (= R. Guilland, *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines I*, Berlin 1967, 469-477).

[14] J'ai commenté quelques rares textes concernant ce phénomène dans: Οἱ αὐθένται τῶν Κρητικῶν το 1118, Πεπραγμένα τοῦ Δ' Διεθνοῦς Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου II, Athènes 1981, 308-317; et dans: *Liens de vassalité dans un apanage byzantin du XII^e siècle*, Ἀετός. Studies in honour of Cyril Mango, ed. I. Ševčenko and I. Hutter, Stuttgart and Leipzig 1998, 257-263.

[15] Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica II*, Berlin 1958, 257; Ch. Brand, *The Turkish Element in Byzantium*, Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries, DOP 43 (1989) 7.

[16] J.-Cl. Cheynet, Du prénom au patronyme: les étrangers à Byzance (X^e-XII^e siècles), *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 1 (1987) 57-66.

[17] Aux références réunies par Moravcsik, ajouter: M. Treu, Eustathii Macrembolitae quae feruntur aenigmata CXXIX, *Programm des königl. Friedrichs-Gymnasiums zu Breslau*, 1893; *Catalogue des manuscrits* alchimiques grecs 5 (1928) 61, 62; Giomo, *Lettere di Collegio, rectius Minor Consiglio (1308-1310)* (Miscellanea di Storia Veneta 3/1), Venise 1910, 312 (8 mars 1309 à Coron).

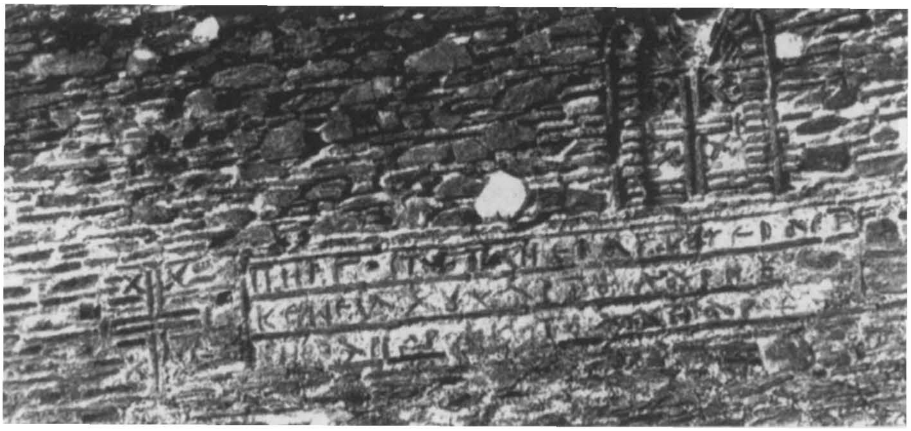

Fig. 1 Inscription d'Andronic Lapardas

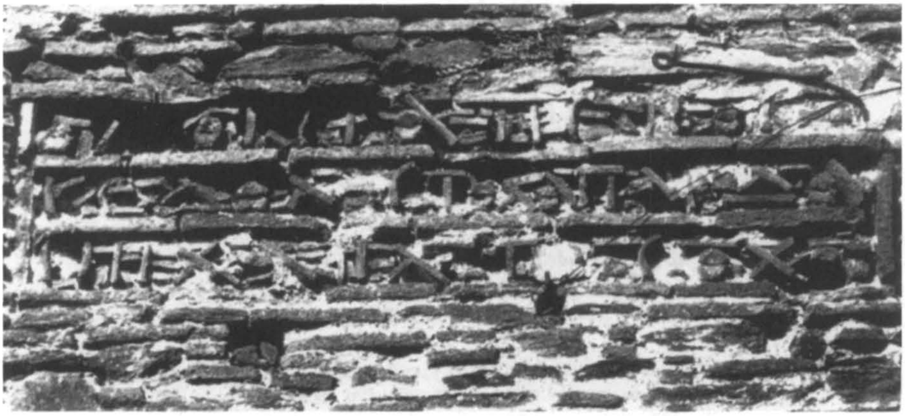

Fig. 2 Tour d'Andronic Lapardas. Inscription de Michel

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